THREE YEARS WITH THE CHILDREN

AMOS R. WELLS

July 8, 1915.

THREE YEARS WITH THE CHILDREN

By AMOS R. WELLS

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One Hundred and Fifty-Six Children's Sermons for Pastors, Illustrations for Primary Sunday-School Teachers, and Object Lessons and Blackboard talks for Superintendents of Junior Societies

BY

AMOS R. WELLS

Author of "Sunday-School Success," Etc.

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INTRODUCTION

No art is so beautiful and necessary, no art is so profitable, as that of talking to children. No art is so easy, if the spirit is right; no art is so difficult, if the spirit is wrong. A love for the children is the basis of success. If in addition you have a sympathetic insight into the child's nature and a modicum of art, you are sufficiently well equipped.

You will not "talk down" to the children, nor will you talk over their heads. You will not use baby language, nor will you use your grown-up nomenclature. You will repeat enough to fix your points, and you will not wander. Every sentence will be clear as crystal and straightforward as an arrow. You will leap into your subject with a sprightliness that will catch them at the start; for if they are not caught then, they never will be caught. You will spice it with fun, and you will never be afraid of earnestness.

If nothing else can justly be claimed for this volume, certainly all will agree that here is a copious assortment of talks with children. There are 156 of them,—enough for three years of Sundays. They are to be found in great variety of

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

kinds,—stories, blackboard talks, exercises for the children, conversations, children's sermons, plans for the primary Sunday-school class, schemes for the superintendents of Junior religious societies, illustrations of Bible events, talks for the different seasons from New Year's around the year to Christmas, temperance talks, missionary talks, object lessons,—all sorts of addresses to children are represented here. Bear in mind this variety if you come across some method you may not like; remember the differences in tastes and abilities, and that this especial method may be the one best suited to some other worker.

So many talks are included in this volume that it is necessary to present many of them in outline, though enough of each kind are given complete to furnish abundant models. It is better thus, since a talk with children must be made thoroughly your own, both ideas and expression, before it can be given with pleasure or profit.

Another advantage in giving a great variety of talks is that each will serve, as it were, as a sample of its class, inciting the worker with children to go on to the making for himself of just such talks, only better. Thus an object lesson from a penknife may suggest one from a balloon, or a conversation talk upon nutmegs may suggest one upon firecrackers. It all depends upon the originality of the worker.

In writing this book I have had in mind the needs of the three chief classes of public workers

with children,—ministers, Sunday-school teachers, and superintendents of Junior societies. Practically everything in this volume, though the talks may be labelled with references to particular classes of workers, will be found just as useful for all classes. I hope, too, that the book will aid parents in teaching spiritual truths to their children at home.

I have prepared a very full index, in which are given not only the titles of the talks, but also their topics when these are not plainly indicated by the titles. My aim has been to make the book in every way practically useful, and it will be a great joy to know that these pages have helped to bring any of Christ's little ones closer to their Saviour.

AMOS R. WELLS.

Boston, Mass.

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TRIPPED UP

A Temperance Talk

JACK COLLINS, with his *six* friends, stepped into the rum-shop one evening. As they went out, late that night, walking very unsteadily, the saloon-keeper put a big stone right in the way of one of Jack's comrades, and tripped him up. The comrade fell and was killed. That comrade was Jack's Health.

The next night Jack Collins, with *five* friends, went to the rum-shop again, and again they all got drunk,—so drunk that another friend was tripped up, as he went out, by the sly saloon-keeper. That friend was Jack's Reputation.

The third night, in just the same way, another friend was lost,—this time, Jack's Wealth. The fourth night the stumbling-block tripped up Jack's Happiness, and the poor fellow from that time on had nobody to keep him cheerful. The next friend to go was Jack's Mind, so that Jack hardly had wit enough left to call for a glass of whiskey when he came back on the sixth night. And that evening, as he and his sole remaining friend left the

rum-shop, that friend also was tripped up and slain. It was Jack's Soul.

The next night was the seventh, the holy Sabbath, and Jack lay alone in the gutter, his six friends all fallen over the rum-shop's stumbling-blocks. And Jack himself was dead.

HANG OUT YOUR SIGN

A Lesson on Not Being Ashamed of One's Religion

[The speaker will produce the sign at the right moment. It will be very plainly printed on a large piece of pasteboard.]

Once there were two dealers in shoes. One of them, Mr. Shameface, hardly liked to acknowledge that he kept a shop. He hung out no sign. He kept the curtain in his window down most of the time, as if he was afraid to be seen. When a customer did spy him out, he waited on him timidly, as if he wanted to run away.

The other dealer was Mr. Brightface. He hung out a big, clear sign:—

BURTON BRIGHTFACE,

DEALER IN

BOOTS AND SHOES.

His doors and windows were all glass, and the curtains were always up, and his store was well lighted by night and by day. His shop-window was decked out with dainty slippers and shoes of all the pretty styles and colors. He had a brisk way of waiting on customers, and his face wore a happy smile, as if to say, "Yes, I deal in boots and shoes. Pretty good business, isn't it? And I'm getting along finely."

Now which do you think had most customers? And which do you think had most friends? And which do you think had most success? And which do you think is most like *you,* in your Christian life? Answer, children!

THE SHUTTLE

An Illustration of Faithfulness

[It will be of interest if the speaker can show a shuttle with a thread attached to it.]

Once there was a great loom, that was weaving a beautiful silk cloth, of many colors. Silk threads were stretched out in a long row, and that was called the warp. Then there wer shuttles,—little spools of thread of different colors,—that were shot through, between these threads, from right to left, from left to right, making the woof, which bound the whole together into a firm cloth.

Now there was one little shuttle that carried purple thread. The shuttle was very little, and

purple was not much used in the design of the cloth, so at last the shuttle made up his mind that he was not of much use, anyway, and he might as well not do anything. The next time, then, that the weaver told this purple shuttle to shoot through among the threads of the warp, he refused to budge, and so he acted all through the making of that piece of cloth. At last, when they came to take it from the loom, they found that the silk was ugly and ruined because of the gaps in it, just where the little purple shuttle should have gone through.

O boys, girls, you are not very large, nor very wise, nor very strong, but God has a work for all the shuttles in the loom of life. If any one of them, no matter how little, fails to do his part, it hurts, just that much, the whole piece. But if all shuttles work together, and move just as the Weaver tells them to, then a cloth is made that is beautiful enough for the angels to wear!

WHAT IT IS LIKE

Three Illustrations of Sin.

[Objects the speaker will need: a bottle of medicine; a stone hung by a string; a knife to cut the string, letting the stone drop; a crooked plant; a straight plant, tied to a stake.]

Sin is like sickness. It makes people weak and staggering. It keeps people from walking straight in their lives, just as sickness keeps them from

walking firmly along the road. It makes people cross and ugly and disagreeable, just as sickness does. It leads to a death that is worse than any death ever caused by any sickness.

What do you do when you are sick? You have a wise doctor, and he gives you medicine. See; here is a bottle of it. Who is the great Physician? Yes, it is Jesus; and if you ask him he will give you medicine that will heal you of all your sins that make you feel so weak and wretched.

Sin is like a weight. Suppose some one should tie a heavy stone to your feet. You could not leap or run or walk. You could not climb. You could not do much that is good or happy. Wouldn't you hurry to get your knife and cut the string that bound you to the stone, and rush away from the hateful thing? Here is the knife you would do it with—keen and strong.

But sin is a heavier stone. Haven't you felt it pulling you down, away from heaven, away from Christ, away from your dear ones, away from happiness? Ask Jesus, and he will cut the cord that ties you to sin, and you will be free.

Sin is like a twisting. Here is a poor, crooked plant. See how one-sided it is, and how rough and ugly its branches are, all twisted out of shape. The plant should have been tied, when it was young, to a straight stick, and then it would have grown straight and strong.

Haven't you seen many people who are twisted awry by sin? They are bent away from the truth,

and their lives are all uneven and ugly. What can make them strong and straight and beautiful again? There is a wonderful standard, that Christ set up in the world when he came down from heaven. It is his life. If we live close to that we shall be sure, shall we not? to grow straight and strong and beautiful.

IN THE HEART OF THE TREE

The Great Danger of Little Sins

[The speaker should show to the children a piece of wood torn from a hollow and decaying log.]

THERE was once a magnificent oak-tree, tall, and beautiful, and strong.

The winds tried to blow it down, but the more they strained its tough fibres, the stouter they grew to hold the great tree up.

The sun beat fiercely down upon it, and did his best to burn it up; but though its leaves withered every autumn, they came out fresh and green every spring.

The frost tried to enter the crevices and split the tree from top to bottom, but all it could do was to make its bark rough and rugged.

Snows tried to bury it, rain tried to drown it, ground dried up and tried to starve its roots, other trees tried to crowd it out, but still the grand old oak stood there, winter and summer, and defied all its enemies.

But at last, one unlucky day, a little worm crept

into the heart of the tree. It laid its eggs there, and died. Soon there were a dozen worms, and more. They ate a little way into the tree, laid their eggs, and died. Then there were hundreds, and these all ate a little way into the tree, and laid their eggs, and died. So it went on until the heart of the tree was eaten up, and it was hardly anything but a hollow trunk.

Then the branches fell off, one by one. Then the roots dried up. Then the few leaves withered, and none came to take their places. Then the frost got in, and the ice split the great trunk open. And at last the wind blew the tall tree over, and it rotted to pieces among its own dead leaves.

So the greatest enemy of the oak-tree was not the wind, or the rain, or the frost, or the sun, or the soil, but the little worm that it took into its heart, and made a part of itself.

THE FOOLISH PENDULUM

An Illustration of Pride

[The speaker will have his clock to show, and at the close he might set it a-going. Of course he will bring out, by questions or otherwise, the truth that the great Hand back of all human ability is God.]

HERE is a very pretty clock, children. The case is handsome and the face is handsome, but I think you will agree that the handsomest part of the clock is this pretty brass pendulum. Now this clock stopped, the other day, and I fancied a story

to account for its stopping. I will tell you the story.

The pretty pendulum was very proud, and it got to talking to itself something after this fashion. "How important I am!" it cried. "Here am I, the most conspicuous part of the machinery of this wonderful clock. And see! I make all the machinery go. As I swing back and forth the wheels turn, and the cogs catch, and the striking-gong sounds, and the hands on the dial-plate move around.

"Besides, I am beautifully polished, and made of the finest brass, and hung in the most delicate way, and am of a most elegant shape. No wonder that people admire me.

"But why should such a fine creature as I am work all the time?" asked the foolish pendulum, and so it stopped, as I have said.

"Well," remarked the wise old dial-plate, looking down and waving its hands at the foolish pendulum; "so you think yourself too good to work, eh?"

The pendulum did not condescend to answer, but the dial-plate kept right on.

"Let me tell you, Friend Pendulum, that you are not at all as important as you think. Indeed, you do not move the machinery at all, but our black and ugly Friend Weight, hidden in that dark corner. If you want to prove it, suppose you try to start up the machinery again."

Stung by this, the pendulum tried, but all in

vain. Not a wheel moved. Indeed, the pendulum could not even stir itself.

"But why did the machinery stop when I stopped?" asked the pendulum, haughtily.

"Foolish creature," answered the dial-plate; "you stopped because the machinery stopped! Friend Weight has run down."

"Well," said the pendulum, pertly, "suppose you ask this mighty Weight, then, to start up the clock again, since he is so strong."

"O, that he cannot do, either," replied the dial-plate. "A great Hand comes and winds him up, and then he moves you, and my hands, and all the wheels of the clock. There's no sense, Brother Pendulum, in either you or me or the Weight getting conceited. It is this great Hand that gives us all the strength to work, and we ought to do the best we can with the power he gives us, without pride or conceit."

The pendulum was very thoughtful for a long time after this talk, and has not boasted at all since.

CHRIST—RICHEST

A Blackboard Talk

Let the speaker write the name,

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H
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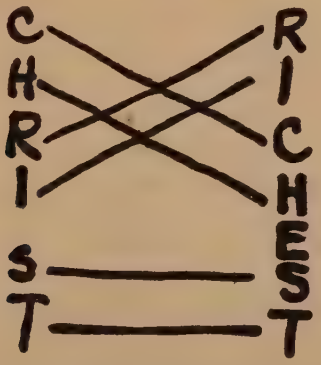
T

upon the board. Then let him talk for a few minutes about Christ's wonderful power. What did he do on earth, children, to show that power? He healed the sick. Think how much money he might have gained by curing lepers, and opening the eyes of the blind, and bringing people back to life!

Then, he could make a few loaves and fishes feed five thousand. Think what a rich merchant he might have become! Or, he could draw the fishes to him, and quiet the storm, and walk on the sea. Think what a rich sailor he might have been. Soldiers fell back before him. He might have been a rich general. He gathered vast crowds about him. He might have become a rich lawyer.

All this will show the children that Christ, even on earth, could have become very rich. And then

think of all that he left in heaven! Draw lines from the letters of Christ's name, and transpose them into



and ask the children what that spells.

But Christ thought little of this kind of wealth, or he would have made his followers rich in worldly goods. Yet he did make them wonderfully rich, and he makes all who love him wonderfully rich. Talk to the children about the love he gives us, and the strength, and the peace, and the joy, and the promises, and the forgiveness, and heaven.

TWO GLASSES

A Temperance Talk

[Show two wine glasses, one full of water colored with black ink, and the other full of water colored with red ink.]

THERE was once a lad who was very sick indeed. The doctor brought him a little glass, like

this, full of this black, ugly-looking medicine. It smelled bad and tasted worse, and the lad struggled and screamed and pushed it away and tried to spill it. He said he was afraid to take it; he believed it was poison. At last they held him and forced him to swallow the medicine, and it cured him.

That same lad, a few years afterwards, was with a lot of his comrades, and they got him to go into a saloon. One of them set before him a little glass of wine, just like this. It looked good, and it smelled good, but the lad shrank back. He had heard what wine would do to his body and his brain and his soul, and he hesitated. "Huh! You're afraid!" sneered one of the boys standing near. "Who's afraid?" asked our lad, and he snatched up the glass, drinking all the wine. Then he called for another glass to show that he was not afraid.

The other day this boy, who was afraid of the little glass of black, healing medicine, but was not afraid of the little glass of red, deadly wine, died in a terrible way, and was buried in a drunkard's grave. Of which will *you* be afraid?

SUPPOSE

A Lesson on Trusting Christ

SUPPOSE you had a great, big, strong soldier, well armed, who marched by your side all the

time, ready to fight all your battles, and keep every one from harming you; wouldn't you feel safe?

Suppose you had the wisest man in all the world, whose gray head contained all the wisdom of every book in the world, to sit down by your side and tell you anything you wanted to know, and advise you in all your difficulties, telling you just what course would bring you out all right. Wouldn't you feel safe?

Suppose you had the most beautiful and most loving woman in all the world to take care of you, —some woman who never got sick, and never died, and never went away, and was always just the same loving and tender and beautiful one, to watch over you and comfort you as long as you lived. Wouldn't you feel safe?

Suppose you had the most sensible friend in all the world to help you do your work,—the man of all men who knew best just what to do and how to do it; the man of the most skilful hands and best-trained mind and warmest, most sympathetic heart; and suppose he was entirely devoted to you, and liked nothing better than to help you. Wouldn't you feel safe?

Open your eyes, boys and girls, and you will see just such a strong and wise and loving and useful friend close beside you. It is the dear Jesus, who is just as really there as if your hands could touch him. He will never leave you, because he has promised to stay with you, and protect you,

and help you, and teach you, and love you, all your lives. Don't you feel safe?

A PICTURE OF PAUL

A Blackboard Talk

[Write—or print—each of the acrostic words as you come to it, and at the close emphasize the initial letters with red chalk.]

PAUL had received that wonderful vision of Christ that had struck him blind. He did not know what God meant to do with him, or how he could serve the God he had so offended. What did he do? (Acts 9: 11.) Paul and Silas were in prison one night, when an earthquake came and freed them. How were they spending the time in prison? (Acts 16: 25.) That was what made Paul so strong, because he was praying all the time. Let us make that word "praying," stand for the "P" in his name.

Paul was never idle. Let us see. How many missionary journeys did he make? And how many places can you name that he visited, some of them several times? And how many books of the New Testament did he write? And how did he support himself while he was doing all this? Surely we must let the "A" of his name stand for "Active."

What did Paul give up to follow Christ and help men? He gave up the chance of an easy life,

of wealth and fame and honor among men. He gave up friends and kindred. He gave up the pleasures of a happy home. He gave up health and freedom. At last he gave up life itself. And all was done for the sake of other men, and for Christ. Must we not say that the "U" of his name stands for "Unselfish"?

Then how true Paul was to the right! He told Felix and Agrippa and Festus and the high priest and the Athenians and the Jews just what he thought of them. He rebuked men's sins without fear. He went just where the Spirit told him to go. He spoke just what God put in his heart to speak. He was true to Christ and to Christ's teaching. Ah, well does the "L" in his name stand for "Loyal"! Here we have it, then:—

Praying
Active
Unselfish
Loyal.

GRAFTING

A Lesson on Starting Right and Getting Right

[Make a notch in the end of one twig, sharpen (flat) the end of the other twig, insert it in the notch, and fasten the two together with twine.]

ONCE there was a man who had a great, vacant field, full of rich earth. What should he do with it? I'll tell you what he did with it. He got a

lot of young apple-trees, and set them out. He set them out very carelessly. He did not stop to find out what kind of apples they were. He did not stop to set the trees in nice rows. He stuck them in wherever it happened, some so close together that they greatly interfered with each other; some too far apart.

Now after a few years these apple-trees, some of them, began to bear apples, and what do you think they were? Crab-apples, every one of them. Crab-apples! Sour and small at that.

The man didn't know what to do. He had wasted lots of time and money on that orchard. He was just as some of us will be if we are careless when we are young, and do not look or care to see what we are setting out to grow in our lives, or take any pains with our planting, to have it right. What should the man do? Well, I'll tell you what he did do.

He went around to every tree in his orchard, and took the branches one at a time. He sawed off the branches, crab-apples, leaves, and all. Then he made a cleft in the stump of each branch that was left, and bound in that cleft a branch from a tree that bore sweet apples. These branches were given him by a great gardener, who keeps a wonderful orchard of sweet trees for that very purpose.

This work is called grafting. I have two twigs here, and I will show you how it is done. The largest twig, that I will stick in this flower pot,

we'll call the crab-apple-tree, and here is a twig from a sweet apple-tree that I will graft in.

And then the whole orchard was changed because the sweet apple branches grew on to the old stumps, and the sap rose up from the ground into them, and they bore fruit, lots of it, and very sweet. But think of all the years that were wasted. And think of all the trouble the man had been put to, sawing off the branches one by one, and grafting in new branches to take their places. And all of that he might have spared himself by setting out the right kind of trees. in the right places, when the orchard was young.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST

A Blackboard Talk about Heaven

What is the most beautiful thing in the world?

As the children name these things, write them down on the blackboard, or, better, draw rapid sketches illustrative of them, if you can. This list may read: a rose; my mother; a pretty river; my baby brother; a nice lawn; the woods, etc. Then tell the children that, beautiful as all these things are, there are things in heaven so much more beautiful that we cannot even imagine how lovely they look.

What is the most helpful thing in the world?

A similar list may be made, in a similar way. It will contain some such things as: a book; a

church; my father; my teacher; the school; the Bible, etc. Then tell the children that, helpful as all these are, heaven has helps that will teach us and strengthen us more than any of them.

What is the merriest thing in the world?

The list this time may read: a game of blind-man's buff; a jolly song; a boat-ride; a sleighing party; my Uncle Jack; vacation time, etc. Tell the children that heaven will be just crowded with things that will make people bubbling over with a joy that no one can get from the merriest things of the earth.

What do you like best?

This list, of course, will be a long one, if you wait to get each child's special preference. Make the list as long as you have time for, and then tell the children that every hour in heaven they will see and enjoy things that they will like far better than any of the things they have named, or all put together.

Then isn't heaven worth working for? And don't you all want to go there, and get as many as you can to go there with you?

THE SIX PEDESTALS

An Object Lesson on Idolatry

["And now how ashamed of our idols we should be!" The speaker should emphasize this thought at the close, after the children, in imagination, have filled up the sixth pedestal.]

THE poor heathen children across the sea set up on pedestals rude images of wood or stone or metal, and worship them as if they were God. Those are their idols. But anything is an idol which is honored more than God, or as much as God. We do not bow down to wood and stone, but there are a great many idols in Christian lands, just the same.

Would you like to see some of them? Here are six pedestals on the table before you, and I am going to place on them some of the idols you are likely to get to worshiping, if you do not look out.

On the first pedestal I will place—what? Yes, a gold coin. Many and many a man makes an idol of money. How do you know when a man loves money more than he loves God?

On the second pedestal I put—what? A ball and a doll. Ah, I know many and many a boy and girl who cares more for play than for pleasing Jesus.

On the third pedestal goes—a mirror. What is that for? Why, haven't you seen lots of young

folks who think far more about their good looks than about their work for Jesus?

On the fourth pedestal goes—a piece of jewelry and a bit of ribbon. You know what they stand for,—the love of fine clothes, that often stands in the way of the love of Jesus.

And on the fifth pedestal I place—a doll's pillow. It is only a doll's pillow, but if you will imagine it large enough for your bright heads, boys and girls, I guess you will be able to see what idol I mean by it. Yes, the idol of laziness, which keeps ever and ever so many people away from Jesus.

And here is one more pedestal, but there is nothing on it. And now, if some of you wide-awake children will tell me of something else that men love, often, more than they love Jesus, we'll see what ought to be put on this vacant pedestal.

GOING TO SCHOOL

A Talk for School Children

Did you know that Christ is a schoolmaster? Paul speaks of him in that way; and indeed he is a schoolmaster, and the best that ever was.

What book is used in the school of Christ? Yes, the Bible. It must be studied every day, and committed to memory, and carefully explained, and especially we must go to Christ him-

self and ask him to show us about the hard places in it; and he will gladly do so.

What are the things taught in Christ's school? All sorts of things. Christ will teach you to do your work about the house, how to behave in school, how to win friends, how to keep a smile on your face, how to bear headaches, how to make a rainy day a bright one,—all sorts of things are taught in this wonderful school of Christ's.

Who are the scholars there? Any one that loves the Teacher. He will not teach those that come because some one orders them to, or because it is a popular school, or for any reason except that they love the Teacher and want to learn. This is because those are the only kind of people that can learn anything, anyway.

How long is this school in session? As long as the scholars live. There's always something to learn, and the lessons are all the time growing more beautiful and more interesting, so that the longer the scholars stay the longer they want to stay. And when they die, they keep right on in another school, a higher school, that Christ teaches up in heaven.

And now, children, have you really entered this wonderful school of Christ's?

THE FOOLISH FLOWER

A Lesson on Selfishness

[Show the children some shrivelled plant, with withered blossoms.]

THERE was once a little flower that was designed by its Creator to be one of the most beautiful of the flowers of the forest, but long before it was time for this, the flower became so absorbed with thoughts of its own beauty and importance that it would have nothing to do with anything around it. It refused to push its roots down deep into the soil, and indeed held them gingerly away from it, because it was so dirty and so black. It refused to open its petals to the refreshing rain, calling it an impertinent intruder. Just as haughtily it refused to open its leaves to the sun, because it was so common, shining on all the other flowers and leaves of the neighborhood. Our foolish flower would have nothing to do with the breeze, and shrank from it because it blew over the other flowers before it came to her, and she wanted a breeze all her own. In the same manner the bees that carried pollen from flower to flower, and helped them in many useful ways, our foolish flower rejected.

And so while the other flowers were flourishing, and were adding every day new beauties of form, and color, and fragrance, drawing them from the common elements of the sun and soil, the air and

the rain, this foolish flower of ours, withdrawn to itself in its own pride, slowly withered away, became dry and ugly, and at last was pulled up and thrown aside.

Is there among you any boy or girl so foolish that he wants the world made just for himself, and won't have a thing if others have it? so foolish that he never thinks what he owes to the world, but only thinks of what the world, as he fancies, owes to him? In that case he will never become beautiful and strong and shapely in his character, but will wither away and become as ugly as our foolish flower.

THE SENTINEL

A Picture Talk on Conscience

Let the speaker provide for this meeting two pictures,—one a large one of a human face, and another, a picture of a soldier standing on guard, small enough so that it can be pinned up by the side of the lips of the face. Tell the boys and girls that this meeting is to show them how to place a sentinel at the doors of their mouths. What is this sentinel to stop? The children will quickly tell you. He must call "Halt!" to unkind words, to careless speeches, to sneers, and irreverence, and silliness, and lies, to exaggeration and slang.

What is the sentinel? The children may not

be so ready to tell this, but a few questions will get them to say that the sentinel is our conscience.

And what is the gun that he is to hold? A few more questions will bring out the answer, prayer. That is the only thing that can promptly and efficiently cry "Halt!" to these evil things that come out of their mouths.

BURDENS AND WINGS

A Story-Sermon on Cheerfulness

I SAW a company of pilgrims on their way through life, and all the members of this company were bright and cheerful, though each one of them bore on his back a heavy burden. I went near and asked them what their burdens were.

"Mine," said one, "is sickness." "Mine," said another, "is my dullness. I am so slow to learn." "Mine," said a third, "is the opposition of those with whom I have to work, and the envy of those who are about me." Still a fourth answered that his burden was made up of failures, the failure of his undertakings even when he did his best to make them succeed. Another was heavily weighed down with the great burden of a terrible danger, and still another was staggering under a heavy load of doubt.

Yet all of this company trod cheerily on, singing beneath their burdens, and making the way as pleasant as they could for one another.

And as they went on I thought I saw a beautiful angel meet the company, and, going up, place in the burden on the back of each two small white seeds. The angel passed on, and I followed the company a little way.

To my astonishment, I saw something white spring from each of the heavy burdens that the pilgrims were carrying, and these white things grew before my very eyes until they became for each of them two magnificent white wings, that lifted the weary travellers from the dusty road, and carried them on, burdens and all, so that weariness was over for them, and they speedily got to their journey's end.

On another day, walking along the same road of life, I saw a similar company of pilgrims, each also with a heavy burden on his back; but the appearance of the entire band was very different from that of the first. Every one was downcast, a dark cloud on his face, his head drooping, his lips close set in an ugly fashion. Few words were spoken as they trod painfully on, and those few words were only of grumbling and fault-finding.

I came upon the angel this second time, also, and when I saw that he was letting the band of pilgrims pass without placing in their burdens the two white seeds that sprang up into such beautiful wings, I asked him if he did not mean to give these pilgrims the same relief he gave the others, especially since they seemed to need it far more than the former company.

"It is impossible," answered the angel; "and the saddest thing about it is that the travellers themselves have rendered it impossible. Those wonderful seeds will not grow in the burdens you see these men carry, just because everything about them is so dark and gloomy. Unless they get more sunshiny tempers, unless they sing a little, and try to help each other, and look with greater faith and courage toward God, I very much fear they must bear their burdens just as they are, and carry themselves painfully on foot to their journey's end."

This that I saw, boys and girls, will give you one hint, at least, of how burdens may be borne.

THE ALARM CLOCK

An Object Lesson on Conscience

LET the speaker bring in an alarm clock, all wound, and set for a certain hour. He turns the hands and lets the alarm go off.

"Why, what a racket, children! I should think that would rouse the soundest sleeper, wouldn't you? But, do you know, men get so that they can sleep through all that noise. How do they do it? Well, at first they spring up promptly, as soon as they hear the ring. But soon they grow careless and lazy, and turn over for another nap, even after the alarm has sounded. And soon they can sleep right through the loudest

alarm, even if it rings only a few inches from their ears.

"On the other hand, children, if a man sets his alarm regularly at the same time each day, and obeys it when it rings, jumping up without a thought of another nap, some way he becomes a sort of alarm clock himself, and doesn't need this clock of wheels and springs. He will wake up at just the right time, and will have his eyes open before the first whir of the clock has sounded forth. Isn't that queer?

"Now this is just the way your consciences act, my boys and girls. If you do not obey them promptly and always, soon you will cease to hear them at all. But if you mind what they say, you will become wonderfully sensitive to the right and wrong, so that you can know what your consciences will tell you even before they speak."

DEBTS

A Blackboard Talk about God's Gifts and Our Duties

PRINT on the board a large copy of a promissory note: "For value received, I promise to pay. .... years after date, to ....., ... dollars, at ..... interest per annum." Explain to the children what this means, and fill up the blanks for an imaginary loan.

Then talk about what God has given us as a loan. The lines of the promissory note should be far apart, so that much can be written between them in colored chalk. Above the words "value received" write down, from the children's dictation, all the common blessings, religious and secular, they will tell you about.

Now what are the children to give in return for all this? They cannot give back the same kind of things, as the borrower can return money for money. God does not want this. What does he want? By questioning, bring out what he does want,—prayers, thought, study, love, giving, etc.,— and put these words over the blank preceding "dollars" in the promissory note.

But to whom are we to pay what we owe God? God does not want us to pay it to him; he does not need it; but there are millions of his poor people who do need it. Write down, above the blank introduced by "to .....," the classes to whom we are to repay the gifts of God: the heathen, the poor, the ignorant, the sick, the sad.

There remains the question of time. When are the boys and girls to begin to pay the debt? Fill that blank with the one word "Now!"

THE MOUTH THAT TALKED OF ITS OWN ACCORD

A Story to Teach Helpfulness

I WANT to tell you about a very funny thing that happened to a little girl, who lived in a country called Nowhere. This little girl, whose name was Bess, loved her mother dearly, as she thought, and was very fond of telling her so. But, unfortunately, she did not love her mother enough to help her. She played and had a good time from morning till night, and never offered to do anything for her hard-working mother.

At last there came a day when something very queer happened. Early in the morning Bess threw her arms around her mother's neck, as she was about to go out of doors to play, and tried to say, "I love you, mother." But, to her complete astonishment, she didn't say those words at all, but said, instead, "I'll help you, mother!"

Bess's mother was indeed pleased. Her little daughter had never done anything like that before. So she kissed Bess, and thanked her, and set her to paring potatoes. Bess didn't know what to make of it, and was a little frightened, but she went bravely to work and pared the potatoes, though it looked very tempting out-of-doors. And her mother worked with her, so pleased and happy that she was singing all the time. When they got done, she looked so good and nice, and

Bess was so happy, that she threw her arms around her mother's neck a sceond time, saying, as before, "I'll help you, mother dear!" But this time Bess really meant it, for she had found out how delightful it was to help mother; and from this time on she not only loved her mother, but she showed her love in kind and helpful ways, and so loved her mother more and more.

SOME STRONG THINGS

An Object Talk

LET the speaker show the children a bar of iron. This is strong. Show how it cannot be twisted, and use it as a symbol of the sturdy strength that should be shown in resisting temptation.

Bring some seeds, and show how the small seed becomes a great tree simply by reaching out toward the sunlight, the air, and the rain. In the same way, they, too, may become great and strong by reaching out toward God and God's work, by trying to do something for him.

A small lamp will stand for the power of heat. Show how heat is changing water into steam, and moving all the great factories, locomotives, and steamships of the world. Any boy or girl may get the same strength if he will become all on fire with zeal for God, bubble over with enthusiasm, and whatever he does for Christ, do it with his might.

The mysterious strength of electricity will illustrate to the children, especially if an electric light is near by, the power of swift obedience. They can become much stronger than electricity if they will be as ready as it is to run on the ways that God marks out for them.

The strength of human muscles should be mentioned. Much should be made of the way in which muscles grow strong if they are used, and become weak and wither away if they are tied up and not put into service.

But the children are higher than all these things, far more important in God's sight than the iron or the seed, than heat or electricity or muscles; and so, with God's help,—and he is always ready to give it,—there is no boy or girl that cannot be stronger than any one of these, or all of them put together.

OUR JOURNEY

A Talk about Getting Ready for Heaven

[A map showing America, the Atlantic, and Europe would make this talk more vivid. If the talk is used in England, change "Europe" to "India," and omit the reference to French and German.]

SUPPOSE you were going to go to Europe. Would you forget all about it, never thinking of it or speaking about it? Or would you do all your thinking and talking about it only one hour of one

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

day in the week? O no! I think it would hardly be out of your thoughts for a minute. You would talk it over with every one you met.

And you would be getting ready for it all the time. You would be studying about the countries you were to see. Maybe you would try to learn a little French or a little German. You would get ready your dresses, and plan what things you would take with you and what things you would leave behind.

If it rained or was cloudy you would care little, for were you not going to Europe? If it happened that your mother wanted you to stay home from a certain picnic, you would gladly stay, for you were going to Europe. You would count all these little troubles not worth minding, with the great journey so soon to come.

Now many of you children may never go to Europe, but all of you are going to a far more wonderful place,—heaven. How ought you to be getting ready for that great journey? Remember, you may take the journey to-morrow; and, even if you live here many years, it will seem, after all, only a little time.

Wouldn't it be sensible to talk about it a great deal, to find out what sort of place heaven is, what kind of people are in it, and what you must do here to get a home there? You can learn on earth the language they speak in heaven, and you can practise the life they live there, and you can

send things before you so as to find a treasure ready for you when you get there.

And if you think and talk and plan for this heavenly journey as you should, you will come to care very little for the troubles of this world, your mind will be so full of the wonderful world to which you are soon going.

THE SEVEN FRIENDS

A Sermon-Story on Friendship

ONCE on a time there were seven friends, and the king thought he would try them, and see whether they were as true friends as they seemed to be; so he sent them on a long journey together.

First they came across a swamp, through which they had to pass. Six of the friends helped each other through, but the seventh gave no help to any one. "You are no friend," said the king; and he told the rest to go on without him. So on they went.

Going a little farther, one of the company fell sick. All but one of the friends gladly stayed to nurse him, but the sixth spurred on his horse, eager to reach his inn before nightfall. To this man the king sent word that he might travel the rest of the way by himself. So the five went on together, as soon as the sick man recovered.

Before they had proceeded much further, they were beset by robbers, who burst upon them from a thick forest. Four of the friends drew their swords to defend each other and themselves, deciding to die together as they had lived together; but the fifth ran away as fast as he could make his horse go, and was not seen again. So the four went on together.

A little distance farther, a strange thing happened. A party of soldiers took them prisoners, put them in a dungeon, and told them they must remain there until they promised to be disloyal to their good king. One man readily agreed to do this, and urged the rest to submit; but they scorned him, and encouraged each other to remain loyal to their king. These last the soldiers (for they were the king's soldiers in disguise) speedily sent on their way, but the fourth was kept in prison.

The three that were left had not gone far before the first strayed away on a dangerous path that would have led him to a lion's den. The second quickly pulled him back, though the third was for letting him turn aside from the straight road, if he wanted to. Pretty soon the second, in his turn, took a notion to some pretty flowers that grew on the treacherous edge of a precipice, and was just on the point of reaching after them when the first smartly pulled him back into safety. The third again laughed at this, and asked why he wasn't allowed to fall over, if he wanted to.

At this the king detached the third friend, also, from the company, saying, "I have found that these two alone are true friends, for they help each other over hard places, they tend each other in sickness, defend each other in danger, keep each other loyal, and correct each other when they make mistakes."

IF ——

A Talk about God's Promises

[The speaker, instead of adopting the method here suggested, may draw out the children's answers to each question, "What would you do?"]

If, while you were out playing some day, boys and girls, a splendid carriage should drive up, all made of gold and glittering with diamonds; and if it should stop, and a noble-looking man should get down, dressed in the most magnificent way; and if he should invite you to get into the carriage and drive away with him, promising to bring you back in a few hours worth ever and ever so much, —worth enough to keep you in luxury all your lives,—what would you do?

If, while you were on your way to school some day, there should be a mad dog in the street, and you should be walking along a great stone wall, with no gate in it and no way to get over it out of the way of the mad dog; and if, just as the mad dog rushed at you, a big, strong, kind-

looking man should lean over the wall, and hold out his hands, reaching down to pull you up,—what would you do?

If you were lost in a great, black forest, and the night was coming on, and the wild beasts were beginning to howl all around you, and not a sign of a path was to be seen; if you were cold and hungry, and the wind was beginning to blow, and the snow to fall; and if a tall, strong man should appear before you, with a loving face, and a warm cloak, and a big basket of food; and if he should ask you to eat some of the food, and then get into his arms and let him carry you back to your home again,—what would you do?

I know what you would do. You would ride off with the king, and come back rich. You would let yourself be pulled up over the wall out of the way of the mad dog. You would let the kind, strong stranger carry you home. You wouldn't hesitate a moment.

Children! these things are just like the promises of the dear, loving Jesus. Doesn't he promise us all kinds of riches? Doesn't he promise to keep us from all dangers? Doesn't he promise to carry us in his strong arms through all the dark places of life? Let us trust him, and let him do all these kind things that he wants to do for us.

MAKING ONE'S SELF MIND

A Lesson on the Will

[This may easily be converted into a dialogue between the older speaker and some child.]

THE other day I heard John say this: "I can't make myself do right, even when I want to. It's no matter, even if I don't mind my conscience."

Then I set to work to talk to John something after this fashion: "Did you ever see any one," I asked, "who was troubled with aphasia?"

"Why, what a queer word!" said John; "what is it?"

"Aphasia," said I, "is a disease that makes it impossible for a person to use the words he wants to use. For instance, if a man is sick in that way, and wants to say, 'Pass me the bread, please,' he is just as likely to say, 'Paint me the locomotive.'"

"Why, what a funny disease!" said John.

"Yes, and a terrible disease," said I, "when one can't make his tongue say what he wants it to say. And have you ever seen any one with the rickets?" I asked.

"No. What's the rickets?" asked John.

"That's a disease," I answered, "in which the bones lose all their stiffness and become like jelly, so that the poor man cannot walk straight, or even stand up."

"How dreadful!" said John.

"It makes some difference, then, does it," asked I, "whether one's feet mind him or not?"

"Why, of course," said John.

"And have you ever seen a drunken man?" I asked. John's head nodded emphatically, for he had seen lots of them.

"Then you know that drunken people not only have diseases like aphasia and rickets, but, what is worse, they are not even able to control their thoughts. Their hands go where they do not want them to go, their feet do not mind them, their tongue says the most ridiculous things, and their brain is all in a whirl. Isn't that the worst disease of all?"

"Yes, indeed," agreed John.

"And now, John," said I, very earnestly, "you think that all these are terrible diseases, but I just heard you say yourself that you can't make yourself do right even when you want to. Why, that is all that is the matter with the man who has aphasia,—he can't make his tongue speak right when he wants to. And the man with the rickets can't make his feet walk right when he wants to. And the drunken man has no control over himself at all. You don't want to class yourself with these, do you? That would indeed be a serious matter. But I want to tell you, John, that you *can* make yourself do right, if you want to. There may come a time, however, if you don't use this power, when that power will be taken away from

you, and then you will be as bad as the drunken man, won't you?"

John went away with a very thoughtful face, though he said nothing.

PRUNING

An Object Talk on Troubles

[The speaker may illustrate his talk by a rose, full of flowers, nicely growing in a pot, shown beside a scraggly wild rose pulled up in the woods.]

HERE is a beautiful plant, children. See how many flowers it bears, and how lovely they are. It looks as if it ought to be a very happy plant, doesn't it? But let me tell you about its troubles.

It was growing nicely in the ground with a lot of its friends, in a charming place, under the sweet sky and in the fresh air, where the birds could get to it, and the bees and the sun and the rain. Along came the gardener, one day, and separated our plant from all this pleasantness.

It was placed in this little pot. Its roots were pinched back and terribly crowded. It was put under a hot, dirty glass, in a stifling room. No more did it hear the song of birds or the hum of the bees or the splash of the rain. Very often the gardener came with his cruel, sharp knives and shears, snipping here and cutting there. The plant was tied tightly to stakes, and felt itself indeed in prison.

Ah, but the wise gardener knew! Here is a plant, boys and girls, of the same kind, but it has been left out of doors, and has run wild. See how scraggly it has grown. See how its leaves are eaten. See how many worms are on it. See how poor its blossoms are, and how few.

Children, I have shown you these two plants to teach you how much good may come out of things that may seem to us to be very harsh and sad. Haven't you ever seen people whom trouble has covered with blossoms?

A WATER MAP

[This is a suggestion for a talk on the waters of the Bible, a little lesson being drawn from each, and the whole being reviewed at the end.]

THE speaker should make an outline map of Palestine,—a large map, on white paper, if possible, that colors may show well.

Use blue pencil for the waters, and fill in the map before the society with the use of word pictures. "Here is a bit of a river. I see a rich noble going down to it. He has many followers, and he is magnificently dressed, but the poor man is in a horrible plight, with sores all over, for he is a leper. But what is he doing? He is rushing into the water. And see! out he comes again. And again he rushes in; and again. And now,—look, children! Can it be the same man? His skin is clear and whole. His body is erect and

strong. And how happy he is; how happy! What is the river, children? Who is the man? How did he come to bathe in the river? And if God, or God's messenger, tells us to do anything, what must we do about it?"

Proceeding in this way, the map will soon be marked all over with blue: the pool of Bethesda at Jerusalem, bits of the Sea of Galilee, the well at Sychar, the water-whelmed altar on Mount Carmel, the Jordan ford, the Jabbok ford, and Cana, where red may be used instead of blue,—these places readily occur, and these will suffice. Make the word pictures vivid, ask your questions brightly, and do not forget to bring out what each event teaches.

FRANK'S PLEDGE

A Lesson on Promise-Keeping

[This is designed especially for use in Junior Christian Endeavor societies, and other children's organizations that use a pledge; but it may be changed slightly and used to teach promise-keeping in general.]

"FRANK," said a certain Junior's mother, "I want you to go down to the grocery and get me a dozen eggs."

"Yes, mother dear, I will," says Frank, cheerfully.

Now Frank has made a pledge. Let us see how he keeps it.

The first thing that happens, as soon as he

gets outside the gate, along comes Will, going in the wrong direction.

"Hullo!" says Will; "come along to the post-office, Frank, and get your folks's mail."

Now Frank knows that his folks would like the mail, but then his *pledge* said, grocery and eggs. So, though the other thing was good, and all right, he left Will, and went after the eggs.

The next thing that happened, Frank tripped and fell. What did he do? Did he say, "There! I have done my best to get to the grocery. Now that I have fallen, my promise is at an end."

No, he picked himself up, brushed off the dirt, and went right on. *He* knew that a promise is binding, no matter how many times we fail to keep it.

As Frank went on he fell to thinking. "Now, I went to the grocery yesterday, and the day before that, and the day before that, and every day I can remember, almost, except Sunday. And I presume I'll have to keep on doing it all my life. And I'm *so* tired. I guess I'll stop going to the grocery, and go home."

But Frank soon remembered his promise, and his dear mother, and knew that she loved him so much and did so much for him that he never could be happy unless he did something, though it was little, for her. So Frank went on and got the eggs, and came back whistling.

Our pledge, Juniors, is a promise to do just a little for God in return for all he is doing for us.

Let us do just what we have promised, even though there is no harm in the other things we are tempted to do. Let us try again, even if we fail. And let us keep bravely at it, even if it does seem a long and hard undertaking.

THORNS AND CROWNS

An Object Talk on Hardships and Rewards

THE speaker should come provided with symbols illustrating as many of the difficulties of Christ's earthly life as possible. A stone, for the stones they wished to throw at him. Another stone, for the temptation in the wilderness. A piece of hard bread, for his poor fare. A sandal, for the weary roads he travelled. A rod, for his scourgings. Thorns, for his crown of thorns. Nails, for his death on the cross.

These the speaker must use as illustrations of the difficulties and hardships a Christian is sure to meet in following Christ. There is failure. There is ridicule. There are disappointments and vexations, hard work, opposition, self-sacrifice, and many more thorns.

But the speaker will show at the end a crown. That Christ received,—the crown of his Father's approval, the crown of rejoicing over saved souls.

Just such a crown every Christian will receive, if he follows Christ faithfully. And the crown means glory and honor, among men and angels.

It means happiness within and without. It means success, the gratitude of those we have helped, love and blessing and strength and peace. It means riches and power in heaven, and an eternal life with God, who will give us, for our reward, wonderful things we cannot even dream of here, so much more beautiful are they than anything we have ever seen.

THEY OBEYED

Illustrations of Obedience

THERE was once, children, a great locomotive rushing swiftly along in a storm, with an immense train of cars behind it, crowded with people. All of a sudden the engineer saw through the sheets of rain driven by the wind a red light gleaming out. He knew that meant danger. Quick as a flash he moved a lever, and the obedient train stopped at once. A few feet further, and they would all have plunged over a broken bridge into a river.

Once again, children, a vast steamship was plunging along in a fog. She was hastening, for she was behind time, and the hundreds of passengers on board were anxious to reach the end of their journey. Like a flash there came to the pilot through the fog just the gleam of a vessel's signal-lights. He touched an electric button, a bell rang far below him, the engineer heard it, moved a

lever, and the great engine at once reversed its motion, just in time to prevent a fearful collision.

A doctor was driving over a dangerous road on a very dark night. It was a life-or-death errand he was on. Everything depended on his reaching his patient speedily. The road he took was a short cut, and not the main road. It ran along a deep ravine, where it was bad enough to drive by daylight, but doubly perilous to drive by night. The doctor knew the road perfectly, however, and everything depended on his horse. If the horse turned just as he was bidden, all would be well. The horse was trusty, obeyed the reins wisely, and the sick man was saved.

Boys, girls, many and many a time, as you go on in life, it will be a life-or-death matter with you whether you obey your Master well or ill. Christ knows best, and you will never make a mistake if you do just as he tells you, and just what he tells you, and just when he tells you.

THE TWO TENANTS

A Talk about Taking Care of the Body

A RICH man went away, and left two beautiful houses for two men to live in. He charged them no rent, and left the mansions completely furnished with every necessity and luxury.

One man kept his house beautifully. "It is not mine," he kept saying to himself; "it is only

loaned me to live in, and I ought to take the best care of it for my kind friend."

So he saw that nothing decayed or went to ruin about the house, and here and there wherever he saw a chance, he was continually adding something to make the house stronger or more beautiful. The furniture, also, was kept sweet and clean, no scars or scratches were permitted, and whenever the man saw an especially lovely vase or picture or rug he added it to the contents of the house.

The second man, on the contrary, treated his house shamefully. "It is not mine," he kept saying to himself. "In a few years I must move out of it. What's the difference if it does go to wreck and ruin?"

So to wreck and ruin it certainly did go, and as speedily as possible. The weatherboards fell off here and there, the foundations began to crumble, the plastering cracked and fell, the furniture mouldered, the moths got into the carpet, and soon the house was hardly to be recognized as the beautiful mansion his kind friend had loaned to him.

Children, our dear Friend up in heaven has given us our bodies to live in for a few years. They are beautiful homes. See how fair and symmetrical and perfect is everything about them. Now, ought we to treat these houses like the first man, or the second? Not like the rich man I have told you about, our Friend comes constantly to

these houses he has loaned us. What does he find there? Are they sweet and clean, strong and well cared for, and all the time becoming more richly and beautifully furnished? I hope so.

ALWAYS AT IT

A Lesson on Christian Activity

"I'm tired. I've done enough. I guess I'll stop work right here, and rest awhile." That was what the river said, as it hurried on to join the sea. And so the river merely poured into the ocean the water it already contained, and gathered up no more from the upland fields and the lowland valleys. It wasn't many days, as you may well imagine, before the river was entirely dry. Indeed, there was no longer any river at all. When the river ceased getting fresh water, that was an end of it.

"I'm tired. I've surely done enough." That was what the tree said. "I'm tall enough. I have enough leaves and enough branches. Guess I'll stop work." So the tree sent out no more buds and no more leaves, and made no new layer of bark, and called down to the roots that they need not send up any more sap. But any of you children that know about a tree can guess what happened. As soon as the tree stopped growing, it began to die. First the top withered, then the branches fell off, and the trunk became hollow, and at last the storm blew it over.

"I'm tired. I guess I have done enough." What if the great sun in the sky should say that? It might say it, if it followed the example of some children I know. Do you think that all the heat of all the summers the world has known would warm you, then, during the coming summer? No; God knows that to keep the world warm his sun must send out fresh rays all the time without a moment's pause.

And that is why, children, the older folks are always urging you to begin some new thing for Christ. It is because when we cease to take up fresh work, and cease to use the powers and the life God has given us, those powers rapidly pass away, and the life changes to death, just as it would in the case of the river and the tree and the sun, if they decided that they had done enough, and must stop.

TWO HOUSES

A Talk about Christ's Helping in Our Work

Once in a town there were two builders, each busily engaged upon a large house. One morning there came to one of these builders a very strange man. To look at him, you would think he was young, and yet there was something about him that testified of many years and of great experience. He offered the builder his aid for the day, promising to help him in any way the builder

might ask, as well as in a thousand ways the builder could not imagine beforehand.

This builder, however, thought he needed no help, but could do everything with his own unaided hands and brain, so he sternly refused the stranger, who set off at once to see the other builder. By this builder he was gladly accepted, and straightway went to work.

The stranger seemed to be in all parts of the building at once. Now he was assisting to push a cross-cut saw, now he was directing a workman with his hammer and nails, now he was helping to pull on a lever, now he was aiding to mix the mortar just right. Again, he assisted the builder in his planning, or helped the brick-carriers at their heavy task, or was on the wall making a hand with the bricklayers. And through it all, wherever the stranger went, the men fell of their own accord to singing, until the spirit of cheeriness and earnestness had seized every one, and by the end of the day this house was twice as far along as that of the builder that had refused the stranger's aid.

In some such way as this, children, Christ is willing to come to us every morning and help us in our day's work. Not that with hands and muscles like ours he will take hold of our tasks with us, but just as really as this mysterious stranger did, he can assist us in all we do. He can clear our brains so that we can plan to do our work better, he can give us quicker hands and

stronger arms, and, best of all, he can give us clear consciences and happy hearts which will assist us in our work. All this he will do if we earnestly ask him. Has he ever thus come to you?

A WONDERFUL MINE

A Sermon-Story on the Right Use of Money

[It will make this talk more vivid if the speaker has some actual specimens of various ores to show as he talks.]

Once, far away in a part of the world you never heard of, there lived a great king who was the possessor of a wonderful mine. This mine held all the riches that could be imagined. There were great veins of valuable ore running in all directions through the earth, and the king had made shafts reaching down to them, so that any one could work the veins.

Now this king was one of the most generous of monarchs, and he permitted any one who wished, to enter his wonderful mine with pick and shovel and wheelbarrow, and take from it just as much riches as he could.

"As much riches as he could," I said, for it was not always as much as he wished, as you will see, for this mine was very different from other mines. The people went into it in droves, and they all had shovels just alike, and picks just alike, and their wheelbarrows were no different

one from the other. More than that, the veins of ore upon which they worked were all the same, and yet no two men took from that mine the same kind of material. Men who worked next to each other, only a few feet apart, would get from it substances strangely unlike.

One man, for instance, would work all day throwing the ore into his wheelbarrow, and would find, when he trundled it out at night, that the wheelbarrow was entirely empty, and that all the ore had disappeared.

Another man would work in the same way, but at the end of the day would find his wheelbarrow filled with an ugly load of thorns and poisonous weeds, that polluted the very air around them.

Some would wheel from the mine a barrowful of gold, solid and valuable. Others, though they seemed to be throwing into their wheelbarrows nothing but the same dull ore found all over the mine, would come from the shaft at night wheeling before them a barrowful of glittering diamonds, that flashed and sparkled, and made the place seem like daylight though the sun had gone down.

And there were others—and these were the happiest of all—who, as soon as they wheeled their load from the mine, would see the heavy metal suddenly fly upward and disappear in the sky. These people would go away with an empty wheelbarrow and with the men around laughing at them, but yet their faces were bright and merry

as if they thought themselves the richest folks in the world.

I presume you are wondering by this time, children, what this wonderful mine is. It is nothing but *the world,*—the marvellous world, which is so full of riches of all kinds. God lets all of us dig away at it, and he gives us all about the same tools to dig with,—about the same bodies, and the same minds. More than that, he sets before all of us the same great mine of wealth; and yet how different are the results of our digging!

One man finds all the wealth that he thinks he has accumulated turn to empty air. This is because he has been unwise and careless in his work, and has not worked for anything that is permanent and growing.

In the hands of another man all his wealth turns to poison. This is the man who uses for evil purposes the money he gets.

In the hands of a third man, his money remains gold. He is able to use it in worldly ways, but nothing more comes of it. Some men, though, know how to make wonderful things out of their money even for this world, using their money to build beautiful houses, and establish great schools, and found libraries, and buy beautiful pictures, and do other things of the sort.

These same men may belong, if they are wise, to the last class of all. They may spend the money that they make in such a way as to lay up treasure in heaven. They may feed the hungry

and clothe the naked; they may give work to the poor; they may build better houses for those who are living in wretched hovels; they may improve the prisons and asylums, and the workhouses and the schools. In a thousand ways they may let light into the dark places of the world, and happiness into sorrowful hearts. This is the best way of all to use money, and this is the Bible way.

COME TO MY SCHOOL

A Talk on Getting Others to Be Christians

Suppose one boy wanted to get another to go to the same school that he was attending,—how would he go about it? He would begin, of course, to praise the school in every way. He would tell what a beautiful building it had, what comfortable rooms, what beautiful pictures on the walls. He would praise the scholars for their kindness and jollity, and he would have much to say about the teachers, how well they understood boys, how bright they were, and how helpful. He would tell how homelike the school was, and what splendid times he had there. In this way he would soon get his friend quite crazy to go to the same school that he went to.

In very much the same way we can get our friends to want to go to Christ's school, to love and obey the great Teacher. We can tell how good he is, and how wise, and how much he has

helped us. We can speak, too, of the house in which he lives, which is the church, and of the many kind and helpful friends that we have found there. We can show that going to his school means nothing but happy times and increasing wisdom.

We must not forget, though, that the boy who gets his friend to go to school with him does not let the matter drop when his friend has agreed to go. He goes after him, and takes him to school; he introduces him to the teacher and to his comrades; he shows him how to go to work, and makes a place for him in the games at recess.

And so, if we want to get our friends to feel at home in Christ's school, we must take care of them after we have won them. We must see that they know all those whom we know that are in the same school; we must try in every way to make it pleasant for them.

CROWD OUT THE BAD

A Lesson on Good and Evil Thoughts

[For objects, the speaker may show two jars of preserves or jelly, one mouldy and the other not.]

SUPPOSE a man wanted to seal up some valuable liquid so that it would remain just as pure as it was when he first prepared it; how would he go to work?

In the first place, he would boil the liquid in the flask in which it was to remain, and when the

boiling liquid was fairly running over and had driven out before it, as it expanded, every particle of the air, then he would quickly seal it up, and fasten the stopper in so thoroughly that not a particle of air could get in.

The reason for that is this: The air is filled with little substances, far too fine for any eye to see them, and yet these substances, as soon as they have a place to grow in, increase with wonderful rapidity, and at once make foul, and often discolor and thicken, all the liquids that are exposed to the air. Some day you will find that that is why jelly moulds, and yeast ferments, and preserves work. But if the air is entirely driven away and kept away from the liquid we want to preserve, then we can keep it for a very long time.

I think you can learn a lesson from this about the way to keep yourselves pure in your words, and in your thoughts, and in your deeds. It is by filling your lives so full of good thoughts and good words and good deeds that the bad spirits that are all the time trying to creep into human lives have no room to get in, just as the air could not get into the flask when the water was boiling and running over.

The next time you feel yourselves tempted by any evil thought, go right away to some helpful book, or busy yourself with some kind and useful task, and see if you do not find that you have crowded out the bad thought, and kept it from doing any mischief in your lives.

EYES OF ALL COLORS

A Blackboard Talk on Character

DRAW on the board before the meeting five pairs of eyes, using for one pair blue, for another green, and for the others red, yellow, and white chalk.

Explain to the children that the soul sees as well as the body. Indeed, it is the soul that does the seeing even when we say that the body sees. The soul has eyes, then, as well as the body.

And the eyes of the soul are not always of the same color as the eyes of the body. For instance, some souls have blue eyes. The person who sees through these eyes is always, as we say, in the blues. He is always worrying and anxious about everything, even when there is very little reason for worry and anxiety.

Some souls have green eyes. They are jealous of the success of others, and covetous of others' possessions. No matter how many fine things they have, they count them all as very little in comparison with the good things that others have. You have heard jealousy called "the green-eyed monster," have you not? Would you not hate to have those green eyes for the eyes of your soul?

There are others whose soul eyes are red. Red, you know, is the color for danger-signals, and the people that have such eyes are always afraid. In everything about them they see some peril. They

do not trust even their dearest and most loving friends; least of all do they trust their heavenly Father, who is always with them, and ready to preserve them from all harm.

Other souls have eyes of golden yellow, and looking through them everything is sunshiny. These are the loving people, the kind and cheery people.

There are others whose soul eyes are white. Now, you know that white is made up of all colors, and these people have whatever is good in all kinds of eyes. They are trusting and sunny and unselfish. Though they are not afraid of danger, yet they are prudent. Though they do not worry about the future, they look forward to it and prepare for it. Though they are not jealous of others and covetous, yet they learn lessons of others, and get all the good they can from them in right ways.

Your eyes, children, may be hazel, or blue as the skies, or thoughtful brown, or as black as jet—that makes no difference. *What color are the eyes of your soul?*

THE ENGINE THAT STOPPED

A Lesson on Sickness and Death

THERE was once a very complicated engine, that did a very wonderful work. No engine in the world was like it, and no other engine could

turn out such marvellous products. One day, all of a sudden, this engine stopped.

The engineer, though he was very familiar with the engine and had worked with it all his life, could not see what was the matter. Over and under the great machine he peered, investigating all the wheels and pulleys, the axles and cogs, oiling carefully here and there, and all in vain. Then he called the foreman of the establishment, but the foreman could do nothing.

At last, after many hours, the owners came to see what was the matter, and then all the friends of the owners came. They called in the skilled mechanics of the town, and many were the consultations, and much advice was given, but no one could see what was the matter with the engine. At last they sent to other cities, and all men who were wise in machinery took turns in trying to better this machine and set it to going again, but they could do nothing.

At last it occurred to some one,—these people were very foolish, you see, or they would have thought of it before,—it occurred to some one to ask who was the maker of the wonderful machine, and to suggest that they send for him. They did that at once, and when the maker came, he simply gave a glance at the machine, put his finger on a part that was not noticed or understood by the mechanics, and at once, as soon as the power was applied, the great machine began to move, and to do its work even better than before.

Have you ever thought, children, that *our bodies* are the most wonderful machines in all this world, and that they do a work more marvellous than any machine that men can contrive? And have you ever thought, too, that when these wonderful bodies of ours stop their work partly, through sickness, or at last stop it altogether in death, the same great Maker who manufactured our bodies in the first place will be perfectly able to set them going again?—indeed, to give us bodies that are far better than those he has made for us in this world, bodies that will permit us to do wonderful things that our earthly bodies cannot even attempt.

GOING IT ALONE

A Story to Illustrate the Value of Wise Questions

Once there was a man who was taking a journey in a strange country. He knew very little about the customs of the people, and had no map of the country, and a map would have been of little use to him if he had one. And yet this foolish man set out on his journey with the boast that he would "go it alone," that he would not even ask a question of any one, but would find his own way and manage his own affairs.

You can readily see what difficulties such a man would get into. Once, because he would

not ask his way, he got lost in a great wood, and was hours in finding his way out. At another time he fell among thieves, because he went into their neighborhood, though, if he had asked directions regarding his course, he would have been warned against them. Many times he walked twice as far as he needed, because he did not take the pains to inquire the shortest way. For all his lodging and food he paid twice as much as was necessary, through failure to inquire for the cheapest inns. He missed a thousand pleasures, because he did not know where to seek them. He failed to get a great deal of valuable information that he could have gained only by asking many questions.

There followed him, journeying in the same country, a man of a very different sort. He was frank, and fond of talking pleasantly with every one he met. Whenever he was in difficulty, or whenever he wanted to learn anything, he asked questions. He did not ask questions of every one, of course, but chose those who looked as if they knew something. He always went the best way, slept in the best inns, escaped all dangers, and gained from his journey not only a great deal of enjoyment, but a vast amount of useful knowledge.

Now, children, which of these men will you be like? *Ask questions.*

On your way through life you will meet many that know very much more than you do. Never

be ashamed of a sensible question; and especially, ask questions of those that are wise about heaven and God.

THE SEED THAT DID NOT DARE

A Sermon-Story on Growth

Once two seeds of the same kind lay in the ground together. They had waited there many months, and life was growing rather monotonous to them, when they heard a strange voice whispering to them, and bidding them bestir themselves and reach up from the earth into the world that lay around.

"But how can we do it?" said one of the seeds. "We are too little. The earth above us is very heavy. We could never force our way through all that stretch of black, thick soil."

But the wonderful voice kept on urging them. "Just take hold, dears," it said, "of the bit of water that is next to you, and see what will happen."

"It is of no use," said the first seed. "What good could that do?"

But the second seed was more obedient, and did as the strange voice bade it. It took hold of the water, swallowed it, and very soon it noticed that it was a little larger.

"Now once more," said the strange voice, "and again, and again." And as the seed kept on in its obedience it began to swell, drawing in the

nourishment which the water brought it from all the rich soil for many feet around.

Still its neighbor remained sulky and unbelieving, but the obedient seed kept on growing, still in the dark, and with that great weight of earth pressing it down. No earth, though, even if it is many feet deep, can long hold down a growing seed. The white sprouts shot upwards more and more rapidly, the soil crumbling before them, and very soon they appeared above the surface, two little green blades, that reached out eagerly into the wonderful sunlight, and bathed themselves in the fresh air, smiled at the blue sky, talked to the birds and the butterflies, grew and widened, became tall, thick, and strong, and at last after many weeks became a wonderful flower that the people for many miles gathered to see. And all this while the first seed was sulking in the ground, saying in response to the strange voice, "It's no use, I can't do it," until at last the water that it refused to swallow took hold of it and mildewed it so that it rotted away.

From this little story, children, you can learn how to make hard things easy. It is simply by doing as this seed did, taking vigorous hold of all our duties, beginning them without waiting, and growing in power as we work, so that the things that at first seem impossible rapidly become possible to our increasing strength.

MAKING A HOME

Or, What It Means to Be a Christian

A MAN once set out to make a home. How did he go to work? In the first place, he had a skilful architect draw a plan for a house. In a few weeks the plan was completed, nicely laid out on sheets of paper. Every detail of the house was drawn, so that one could look at the plan and tell just where every door would be and every window, and just how the house would look when it was finished. But that plan did not make the home, did it?

Then the builder was set to work. Many carts carried great loads of stone for the foundation, of brick for the chimneys, of boards and plaster and everything else that goes to make up a house. After a while all these materials for the house were gathered together, heaped up on the ground. And yet the man did not have a home, did he?

Then the masons came and built the foundation, and the carpenters came and put together the boards to make the house. The plaster was spread on the walls, the blinds were hung at the windows, the doors were placed on their hinges, and at last the house stood there all but finished. And yet the man had not made a home.

Then came the painters, and covered the boards with pretty colors, and frescoed the walls inside. Then came great loads of furniture, and the car-

pets were laid down, and the rooms became very comfortable and beautiful. But for all that, you would not call that house a home, would you?

What was lacking after all this you can readily guess. The house with all its furniture could not be called a home *until it had people in it.* Very soon a happy family came—grandfather and grandmother, the young married folks and the little children, and then indeed a home was made.

Now all this is to show you what it means to become a Christian. A Christian is just the home in which Christ lives, as Christ himself has said. A *plan* does not make a man or a woman a Christian any more than the plan for that home made the home. If you merely expect sometime to be a Christian, or if you are merely planning just when you will become a Christian, or how you will become one, don't think that plan has made you a Christian. Not a bit of it.

Nor does the *power* to become a Christian make one a Christian, any more than the piles of boards and stone and brick heaped up in the yard made a home. Any man or woman or any boy or girl has all the powers necessary to make a splendid Christian, but until something else happens he is not a Christian, no matter how many powers he has.

Neither do *forms* and *ceremonies* make one a Christian, any more than the house was a home after the walls were up and the boards had taken the form of a house. Simply joining a church,

or going through any other kind of form, will not make you a Christian.

Nor will *deeds* make one a Christian, any more than the furniture and the wall-paper made that house a home. You can keep on forever doing the things you see Christians do and saying the things you hear Christians say, but those things by themselves will never make you a Christian.

No; the thing that is necessary to make you the home in which Christ lives is just the thing that was necessary to make a home out of that house. You must have Christ come to live in your life, to be part of your soul. After that has happened, then your plans and your powers, the words you say and the deeds you do, will all be filled with Christ. But without Christ, all these things put together will never make you a Christian. What you need, then, is to know more about him, and come to love him and obey him with all your heart and soul.

THE PALACE THAT GREW

A Story to Teach Growth in the Christian Life

THERE was once a fairy palace that was connected in a marvellous way with the people that lived in it. This palace was built by a great wonder-worker, and was in every part most beautiful. Its walls were of the most precious stones, and the furnishings within were elegant and luxurious.

A good deal of work had to be done, you may imagine, about such a large and magnificent abode, and the people whom the great wonder-worker permitted to live in it were kept very busy indeed. There is nothing strange about that, but the strange part of the matter is that while the inhabitants of the palace were busily engaged in improving it, keeping the windows bright, arranging the contents in a more beautiful fashion, and planning ways in which the palace could be made still more attractive, and could be put to finer and higher uses,—while the inhabitants were doing all this, *the palace grew.* Of its own accord it added new rooms, and raised itself by many more stories toward the sky.

But another even more wonderful law of the palace was this, that when the people who lived in it forgot to do their work, and took no thought about improving the beautiful home in which they lived, but let its windows get dirty and its furnishings become disordered,— moreover, when they took no thought about using wisely its beautiful rooms for the delight and the good of others,— then the noble mansion, instead of growing, *began to shrink.* It would lose first one room and then another. It would sink down a story in a single day, until the astonished passer-by saw it to be only half the size it was the week before. Sometimes it seemed almost that the inhabitants were in danger of being crushed to death before they came to their senses and went to work

so vigorously that the palace began to grow again.

Do you want to know, children, what this palace is? It is nothing more nor less than the life in which God has placed you. A beautiful and lordly house it is, filled with all the finest and most useful things. While you work in it heartily, and try to make it as beautiful and helpful as you can, then your life will be all the time growing and widening and lifting itself higher toward heaven, and spreading itself out broader on the earth. And if you are lazy and careless, then your life will begin to shrink; it will never stand still; and you, too, like the poor people in the story, will be in danger of being smothered by the closing in of your own life walls.

THE BOY WHO ALWAYS HAD A GOOD TIME

A Sermon-Story about Christ's Presence in Our Lives

HAVE you ever heard of the boy who always had a good time? I have, and I will tell you how it came about. This boy had a great friend, a friend wiser and more powerful than any friend you ever saw on this earth, and this friend would never let him be unhappy.

If, for any reason, the boy felt gloomy or cross, just a word with his great friend would drive away the clouds, and set the sun to shining once

more. If the boy in his studies got discouraged and confused, his brain all muddled, he had only to ask this great friend, who was always with him, and his brain would become clear, and his heart would become brave, and he would go at his task with such vigor that sooner or later he mastered it.

At this boy's play his great friend was always at hand, so that, though the boy did not always beat in the games, and though he was not always most successful in the contests, yet he never failed to enjoy himself, and, far better than that, to help others enjoy themselves, because his great friend knew better how to play than any one else in the world.

Once in a while this boy would get into danger, as all boys do, and then this friend of his would throw his arm about him and ward off all peril, so that no harm ever came near him. If the boy, when at work, felt his strength giving out, he had only to look to this kind friend, and at once his arms would become stronger, his feet more swift, and his whole body would gain new vigor.

The boy always had lots of friends, because his one great friend talked to all the people about him, and got them to liking him. More than that, the boy became very rich; and, best of all, his riches were of a kind that banks could not touch or business troubles affect in any way. The boy enjoyed perfect health, too, except in regard to

ailments that he inherited from his parents; and even these his great friend helped him to bear well.

Do you remember that I call this boy the boy who always had a good time?

Now this boy, children, may be any one of you; and it makes no difference, for that matter, whether you are a girl or a boy. You may always have a friend who will do for you just what this great friend did for the boy of whom I have been talking; and that great friend is Christ.

We cannot see him with the eyes we have now, or hear him with our present ears, and for that reason we forget most of the time that he is with us, and that he has promised to do all these things for us. He will keep us happy. He will encourage us about our studies, and clear our brains so that we can study without worrying. He will add to our enjoyment in all our play, guard us from dangers, strengthen us for all work, draw about us hosts of friends, make us rich with the riches that last forever, and keep our bodies as well as our souls strong and healthy.

Never forget that all these things are true—true literally—and not just a pleasant story. Some day, when we come to see Christ with our eyes and hear him with our ears and touch his kind hands with ours, we shall feel ashamed of these days on earth when so often we forgot our great Friend.

HE FELL AMONG THIEVES

A Talk about Our Invisible Enemies

[This might be preceded by the reading or recital of the parable of the Good Samaritan.]

Once a boy, as he was going along the road of life, fell among thieves, just like the traveller on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. The thieves that attacked our boy were Selfishness and Unkindness. They stole his temper, his manliness, his happiness, and his peace. They did not beat him, as the thieves on the Jericho road beat the poor traveller that Christ told about in his parable; but, at any rate, these thieves gave him a headache, they made his eyes red with tears, and they made him thoroughly miserable.

While this boy was in such a pitiable condition, Master Hasty came near. But Master Hasty was in a terrible hurry; for, as you know, he always has a geat deal of business on his hands; and so he merely gave a quick glance at our poor boy who had fallen among these thieves, Selfishness and Unkindness, and went on his way without doing anything to help him.

Very soon after, Master Pride came that way; but all Master Pride did was to lift his eyebrows and mutter to himself, "What a fool that fellow is! He ought to be ashamed of such conduct."

But the third one that passed that way was the good Samaritan. Just as the good Samaritan

of old poured oil into the traveller's wounds, so this second good Samaritan poured oil upon our boy's temper, and soothed him into kindness again. He healed his evil spirits, and drew him tenderly out of his trouble, showing him the way that led, by Confession Road, to the city of Peace.

Do not think, children, that all the thieves in this world can be seen or heard. Some of the most terrible thieves are just such rascals as this boy fell among,—the thieves that attack the soul. They leave their victims in a far worse plight than the bruised traveller on the Jericho road. And so the good Samaritans, though they often have to minister to sick bodies, can just as often do Christ's work by stopping to minister to sick souls.

TELLING ABOUT JESUS

Illustrations of Christian Testimony

[Show the children your watch in the course of your talk.]

How do the trees and flowers and sky and sun tell about Jesus, who made them and us beautiful and strong? They do tell about him, you know. As the noble psalm says, "The heavens declare the glory of God," and the earth declares it, too. They have no voice,—these lovely things that Christ has made,—but they find a very real way to tell about Christ. They are just what Christ wants them to be. The sun simply shines. The

flowers simply look beautiful. The trees simply spread out their arms. They just take what Christ gives them and are happy with it, and we look at them, and cannot help seeing how good Christ is.

Now we children can tell about our dear Saviour in much the same way. We can simply take the good things he gives us, and be happy. We can just smile like the skies, and shine like the sun, and be beautiful like the flowers.

But we can do much more than this, because Christ has done much more for us than he has done for the trees and flowers.

How does a watch tell about its maker? When a man carries an Elgin watch for a while, and finds it keeping perfect time, and not a second out of the way, he begins to think very highly of the men who made the watch. The watch has really been praising them every minute of every day that it ran so accurately.

Now we can do this, too. We can tell about Christ who made us, by doing as finely as possible things for which we were made. If we do all our work well, and if we bear the name of our maker, Christ, then all our good work will speak for him just as the good work of a watch with "Elgin" on the face of it speaks for the Elgin Watch Company.

But we are far more fortunate than a watch, and we ought to be able to tell more about Christ than any watch can tell about the maker. Why,

we are Christ's children. When our fathers and our mothers do wonderful things for us, give us beautiful gifts, watch over us in sickness, help us in our studies, make sacrifices for us, we don't count it hard to tell people how good and kind our fathers and mothers are. We just say, "I have the nicest father and mother in the whole world," and then we go on to tell what they have done for us.

Now why can't we do this for Christ, who gave us our fathers and mothers and everything else we have that is good? Let us begin the very first chance we have.

WHICH PAID BEST?

A Talk about Sabbath Observance

[Show a placard bearing, in plain letters, the words: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."]

ONCE there were two boys named Jack Knowitall and Will Obey. One Sunday Jack Knowitall sat down to study his lessons for Monday.

"Why," said Will Obey, "that is not right."

"Yes, it is," said Jack Knowitall, "because if I did not I should not know my lessons to-morrow, and that would be wrong."

Will Obey thought that was funny reasoning. "God wants us to know our lessons, of course," he answered; "but one of his special commandments is that we should remember the Sabbath

day to keep it holy. I think he would rather we should remember that than remember our lessons."

But Jack kept right on with his studying. The result was that the next day his brain was so worn out that he could not think at all, and Will got far ahead of him in his class, because his brain was bright and fresh after his day's rest.

So the next Sunday Jack Knowitall thought he would try another plan. He set himself to play a game just as soon as he could on Sunday morning.

"Why, Jack!" exclaimed Will Obey, "it isn't right to play on Sunday."

"Why not?" said Jack defiantly.

"Because it makes Sunday too much like other days, and God wants us to serve him in other ways on that day, I suppose."

"But this game will rest me," insisted Jack, and went right on playing. He played hard, and when Monday came he was not rested a bit,—only very tired. And when he went to play at school it was no fun at all, for he had been playing all the day before.

Will Obey, on the other hand, enjoyed all his games immensely, because he had spent the day before quietly reading and studying about God, talking pleasantly with his dear friends, listening to good and wise people in church and Sunday school, and in other nice and helpful ways.

Now which way of keeping Sunday paid best?

THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

A Blackboard Talk

Draw on the board before the meeting the outline of a girl. Draw it very faintly, so that you can just see it, and the children cannot see it at all.

Begin by saying that there is on the board a girl,—not a real, live girl, but just the shadow, the ghost, of a girl. You are going to see whether Christ can make her alive.

What did Christ do for people's eyes when he was on earth? Surely, if he could make blind eyes see, he could make seeing eyes from the start, so we will put in our girl's eyes. (Use blue chalk for the centre.)

What did Christ do for people's tongues and lips? If he could make the dumb speak, he could surely create their tongues and lips from the beginning, so we will give lips to our girl. (Use red chalk for the lips. At the same time put in the nose, with white chalk.)

After the same manner let the speaker, reminding the children of the healing of the deaf, add the ears, drawing at the same time the hair and the outline of the cheeks and chin.

Speak of the palsied, and add the body. Speak of the crippled, and add the feet. Speak of the withered hands, and add the arms. Speak of the leprous skin, and use flesh-colored chalk over face and neck and hands. Speak finally of the dead

raised to life, as wonderful as if the girl you have drawn should step out of the blackboard and speak to you.

If this illustration is presented with vivacity it will be very effective, whether the speaker is much of an artist or not. Some skilled friend may be persuaded to draw the outlines beforehand, the speaker needing only to make the lines heavy and add the color.

THE THREE RULES

An Object Lesson on the Golden Rule

BRING to the meeting three rules,—one of them painted black, to represent iron; another, silvered; and a third, gilded.

The first rule should have printed on it, in white letters, "I will do to others what they do to me." Show what a common rule this is, and how mean and un-Christlike it is. This rule is followed when we return the cross word for the cross word, when we give a blow for a blow, and a sneer for a sneer. This rule is followed, also, when we give presents just because others have given presents to us, and smile only at those that smile at us, and are kind only to kind people.

The silver rule has printed on it, in black letters, "I will do to others what I think they want me to do to them." This rule is better than the other, but still it is not a perfect rule. If our brother is

sick and asks for candy, this rule will lead us to give him candy,—even though we know that candy will make him worse,—just because he wants it. If we know our friend likes to be flattered, this rule will make us flatter him,—even though he has done nothing worth praising,—just because we want to please him.

But on the third rule—the golden rule—print, in pretty blue letters, the words, "I will do to others what I want them to do to me." We do not want them to do to us anything that will hurt us, and, therefore, we will not in any way hurt them. We want them to be perfectly honest with us, and so we will be absolutely honest with them. We want them to keep us from doing wrong things, even though we may desire to do them, and so we will try to keep them from evil, even though they may be bent on it.

This is the best rule of all, you see, children, for it is Christ's rule, and that is why we call it the Golden Rule. Let us all take it as the rule of our lives.

WHO LIVES IN YOUR HOUSE?

Character versus Looks: a Sermon-Story

I HAVE seen, children, two houses just alike. They were of the same size and shape. They were painted in the same colors, and the lawns in front were precisely similar, and yet these two houses, when one looked at them, seemed to be

altogether different. One of them always had the shutters closed, or, if the shutters were not closed, the curtains were drawn. The lawn in front was poorly kept, the paint on the house was faded, cracking, and dirty, the porches were covered with litter.

The other house, on the contrary, almost made one smile to look at it. Everything about it was bright and sunny. The windows glittered, they were so clean. The turf was kept nicely shaven, the porches were as neat as wax, the open windows let in a flood of light, and from them often smiled and nodded happy faces.

Inside the two houses the contrast was just as great, though the rooms were of precisely the same shape and size, and much of the furniture was alike in both. The one house was dark and gloomy, slovenly and ill kept, everywhere dirty and foul smelling. The other house was bright from cellar to garret, cleanly and attractive in every corner.

And the reason, you see, for this great difference could have been nothing whatever except the people that lived in these two houses. The tenants of the first house were slovenly, gloomy, and fretful, and they made their house like themselves. The tenants of the second house were bright, cheery, and painstaking, and their house became an image of their characters. If you could have transferred the inhabitants of the two houses from one to the other, I am perfectly certain that

the first house and yard would speedily become neat and cheery, and the second house and yard would degenerate into gloom and filth.

Now I have known two people, both with good features and pretty complexions, with the same color of eyes, and the same kind of hair. The body of each was strong and well formed, and the clothes of each were good. And yet these two people were as different from each other as the two houses of which I have told. The faces, so much alike, in one was the frame for an evil spirit; in the other, the setting from which shone happiness and kindliness. The beautiful mouth of one was turned down harshly at the corners, of the other was curved in cheery smiles. The beautiful eyes of one were unkind and sharp; those of the other sparkled with merriment, and were soft with sympathy. This went so far as even to affect the clothes, though they were the same, for on the first the clothes appeared ugly and misshapen, and on the second they appeared as nice and well fitting as the temper of the wearer.

The difference between these two persons, just as the difference between the two houses of which I have just spoken, depended on the inmates. The body of the one person harbored Satan, the body of the other had received Christ. In one dwelt kindness and energy and brightness and love; in the other dwelt selfishness and sloth and dulness and hate.

You can see then, children, that it is a very important question you have to answer when I ask each one of you, "Who lives in the house of your body?"

"WHAT A LOVELY DAY!"

A Lesson on Gratitude

I HAVE brought two plants, children, for you to see. One of them is a splendid great plant, all bright and green, with fresh leaves and lovely flowers. It is going to bear many seeds, too. The other, you see, is stunted and withered. Its leaves are shrivelled up. It has no blossoms, and it will therefore have no fruit.

What made the difference between these two plants? I will tell you.

Both plants were cared for by the same gardener. Both were set out in the same sun and received the same rain. From both the gardener picked the hurtful insects with equal care. Both were kept well sprinkled in dry weather, and well shaded in hot weather. Both had rich soil about their roots.

But one of them kept complaining all the time. The sun was too hot. The rain was too warm. The earth was too moist. The screen over it was too thick. The gardener was too rough. The breeze was too strong. The butterflies were too familiar. Everything was "too" something or

other. Do you wonder that this plant had no time to spare from her complaining for growing?

The other plant, on the contrary, was all the time saying to herself and to the birds and flowers around her: "What a lovely day! What a beautiful blue sky! How kind is the gardener, and how refreshing was the last shower! My roots are having *such* a good time in this rich earth, and the sunshine is fairly forcing my leaves to grow in spite of themselves; though, indeed, they *want* to grow to get out as fast as possible into this fine, fresh air."

That was the way this plant talked, and do you wonder that it grew and bore fine leaves and flowers?

Now, children, God is a kind Gardener, and we are his plants. He gives all of us just exactly the same good care. The same sun shines on us all, and the same rain falls, and he guards us all from danger, and feeds us in all sorts of beautiful ways.

Are you like the thankful plant, or like the unthankful plant that I have been telling about? If you will receive all these good things in the right way, be sure, children, that you will grow strong and useful and beautiful, just like this fine and grateful plant that you see here.

THE PICTURE BOOK

A Bible Drill

THE speaker may construct an agreeable and instructive exercise for the children if he reviews for them some of Christ's parables in the following way: Let him hold in his hand a Bible, and open it and talk to the children as if the pages were covered with pictures, the pictures illustrating Christ's parables. Imagining he sees one scene of the parable, let him describe the picture vividly, and then, turning in imagination to another picture,—the concluding scene of the parable,—let him ask the children to tell what he will see.

For example, he may say: "I am looking at the picture of a man sowing grain in a field. The man is very earnest, and is sowing his seed far and wide. There is a beaten path running through the field, and some seed has fallen, I see, on the path. In one corner of the field is a great mass of weeds and brambles. The sower is so eager that he has scattered seed even here. And here in another part of the field is a lot of stones, but the seed has fallen among the stones also. On the next page is another picture, showing what became of the seed that the sower scattered. Can any of the boys or girls tell me what this picture looks like?"

Or the parable of the prodigal son may thus

be described: "Here is a very interesting picture —a picture of a lot of swine feeding in a field; and on one side, sitting on a stone, is a young man who seems tired and sick. His head is in his hands, and I think he is weeping. But I will turn the page. Good! Here is a much pleasanter picture. I wonder if some of the children can tell me what it is."

Dec 4 '16

THE SICK BOYS

Illustrations of Rejecting Christ and Receiving Him

THE four boys were Ned, Rob, Tom, and Ben, and they were all sick with scarlet-fever. I want to tell you in what different ways they acted toward the doctor. Ned, in the first place, would have no doctor at all. His mother urged it, and his father urged it, but he would not hear of a doctor, and they were so foolish as to yield to him, until it was too late. They did call in a doctor when he was too sick to object any longer, but the doctor could do nothing for him, and so poor Ned died.

As to Rob, he let his parents call the doctor, but when the doctor came he made fun of him to his face, pushed away his hand when he felt of his pulse, and ridiculed him after he had gone. He would not take the medicine the doctor left, nor would he mind any of the doctor's orders. He was so disobedient that the disease got the better of him, and Rob, too, passed away.

The third boy, Tom, though he let the doctor be called, and though he did take the medicine the doctor gave him, and carried out the doctor's orders, yet had no faith at all in the doctor, and had no hope that he would ever get well. Indeed, he gave up completely, and did nothing but weep and moan all day long. He was very sick, but the doctor said that he might get well if he would only be more courageous and have more faith in the doctor and his medicine. But that faith Tom would not have, and finally he, too, died.

The fourth boy, Ben, did none of these foolish things. When the doctor came he saw that he was his friend, listened eagerly to all the doctor told him, and obeyed his every word. He believed that the doctor would cure him, and was cheerful and hopeful, and, sure enough, he got well.

I have told you the story of these four boys, not because all boys who are sick have just the same experiences, by any means, but because the story will show you some of the ways in which people are likely to reject the great Physician, Jesus. Some people will have nothing to do with him, and will not even let him come into their lives and help them. Some people, when he comes, will not obey him, nor do a thing that he says. And still others, though they obey him, do it not because they love him, or because they have any faith in him, but because their friends want them to, or because they are afraid of punishment, or

because it is popular, or for some other foolish reason. While there are others who, like Ben, receive the great Physician in the right way, obey him, and love him, and trust in him; and in this class I hope will be all the children of all the world.

THE GIFT SCALE

A Sermon-Story for Christmas

ONE day, just before Christmas, there came to a certain town a Christmas angel. Did you ever hear of the Christmas angels? There are many thousands of them, though usually, of course, you cannot see them.

This Christmas angel carried with him an immense pair of scales. They were so large that they could weigh anything that was brought to them, and he made a proclamation that all who wished to find out how much happiness the presents they meant to give that Christmas would bring to those who received them, might learn this if they applied to him.

And so the people of the town came bringing their gifts to be tested in the great scale. The Christmas angel stood by, placing in one pan of the scale a brilliant jewel that glittered in the sun like a thousand diamonds, and in the other pan he placed the gift, whatever it was.

One very rich man came with a dray on which was an elegant piano that he was going to give

his daughter. This was rolled into the pan, and at once the jewel sunk, and the piano, heavy as it was, bounced into the air as if it had been a feather. The angel explained to the man that his gift would bring very little happiness because he was giving it carelessly and out of a feeling of pride, intending to boast of giving such a rich gift.

Another man brought a set of beautiful cut-glass dishes. They cost many hundreds of dollars, and he was going to give them to his wife. He was giving the present just because he thought it his duty to do so, and not because he loved his wife and wanted to make her happy. And so the wonderful jewel sent this gift also tossing high into the air, and the man carried it away knowing that it would bring very little happiness.

The next present carried itself into the pan, for it was a team of horses and a carriage. Horses and carriage, however, all flew into the air together, because, as the Christmas angel saw, they were given grudgingly, and simply to pay back a present the giver had received.

A young woman came and placed in the pan a book that she was going to give her father. This book, however, was selfishly chosen, not because her father wanted to read it, but because the young lady wanted to read it herself, and no wonder that the marvellous jewel sunk and the selfish present rose.

Still another present that was brought a young

man came carrying. It was a chair that he had purchased for his mother. He had given the matter no thought, however, and had selected just the kind of chair she did not like and would not find comfortable. It also was weighed and found wanting in power to bestow happiness.

Finally, after many presents had been tested, and some of them found good, and many of them bad, there came along a little girl closely hugging a package in which was wrapped a spectacle-wiper that she had made for her grandmother. She had thought long about it, had found out that her grandmother wanted it, had saved her money to buy the chamois skin, and had worked it very carefully herself. She was bubbling over with joy at the thought of how much her grandmother would be pleased with it. And sure enough, the wonderful scales thought so too, for the jewel itself this time flew into the air, and the chamois-skin spectacle-wiper sunk to the ground as if it had been lead.

I hope you have got a hint or two, children, from this little story. You can see how it is that, if you are to make this Christmas a happy Christmas for others, you must have love in your heart and thoughtfulness in your head.

THE CIRCULAR PATH

A Sermon-Story for New Year's

Once two young men were wandering in a great forest. Their names were Jack Silly and John Wise. How they were placed in the forest I have not time to tell but there they were, and the forest stretched for miles and miles. Indeed, it was such a great forest that it would take a good walker a whole year to go through it from the place where they were to the nearest point out.

Jack Silly and John Wise went along a little way together, but very soon they parted company. This was because Jack persisted in walking in a circle, as any one is sure to do if he walks in a great forest without carefully directing his course. He sauntered carelessly along, every now and then finding himself in a great marsh, from which it took him a long while to make his way out. He ate whatever he could lay his hands on, and often got very sick with poisonous berries. He stumbled over roots and stumps, plunging along in the dark. He trod on serpents, and narrowly escaped fatal stings. He wandered into caves where wild beasts were, and was torn by their sharp claws. Over and over he passed through the same circle, stumbling into the same swamps, falling over the same roots, even entering the same dangerous caves, and at last he perished miserably in the forest.

John Wise, on the contrary, sighted sharply from tree to tree, and so kept his course perfectly straight; or, if he ever had to turn aside to escape from a dangerous swamp, or to go around some great rock, he directed his course so skilfully that it was always true to the same line. He chose for food only the berries that he saw eaten safely by the animals. He carefully avoided all dangers, and trudged on industriously from day to day, until at last he came out of the forest and found himself in the most beautiful city in all the world.

From this little story, boys and girls, I want you to learn just one thing. There are many people who go through the year, and go through their lives, just as if they were walking in circular paths. They make the same mistakes day after day. They never learn from their blunders how to avoid them, or from their follies how to become more wise. That is not the way you children will act, I am sure. You will follow the example of John Wise. You will learn from the past how to live better in the future. You will look back over the year through which you have been walking, and will get from it all the lessons you can that will help you to live better in the year to come. Will you not?

PROMISE SEEDS

A New Year's Object Lesson

HERE, boys and girls, are four seeds. They are very different, you see, in size and shape. They cannot talk, and yet to me they seem to speak, and each one of them seems to make a promise. This little black one promises me that it will become a beautiful morning-glory, hung thick with brilliant flowers. This large yellow seed makes the promise of a sturdy green corn stalk, bearing stoutly many well filled ears. This acorn makes promise of a great tree, strong to last for centuries, useful for many services of man. And this round brown seed has in it the promise of fragrance and beautiful color and dainty shape, for it is the seed of a sweet-pea.

You can hear these promises as well as I could, now that I tell you what these seeds are; but, after all, what would become of these four promises, if I should lay these seeds on some shelf? You know, all of you, that the promises would soon be dead promises. The only way to make these seed promises amount to anything is to put the seeds in the ground, where rain can fall upon them, and the sun can shine on them, and the soil can feed them.

At the beginning of this year I am sure that all of you want to make some good promises to the dear Saviour who has made so many rich

promises to you. But are these promise seeds of yours going to be laid on the shelf? I think you will all want to plant them. You can do it. You must put them in the soil of a faithful character. You must fertilize them with many prayers. You must pour upon them the strong rains of determination, and you must shed upon them the warm sunlight of faith and hope. And if you do these things, then these promise seeds of yours will be sure to grow, and bring forth rich fruit through all the months of this year.

A BOX OF WINGS

An Object Talk on Bible-Study.

[Make sets of wings out of tissue paper and take them, one by one, from a box as you talk.]

ONCE a soldier was about to start out on a long and very difficult journey for a great king, and the king, who was also a very wise man, gave him to help him on the way a wonderful box. This box, as the king showed him, contained a large number of little wings, each of them labelled; and whenever the soldier on his journey came to any danger that corresponded to the label on any of the wings, he had only to fasten the right set on his shoulders, and at once they would begin to fly, and would lift him above the trouble, whatever it might be, and put him down in a safe place.

One of these pair of wings was marked "For Robbers," and the soldier clapped them on when he was attacked in a dark woods by some bandits. At once he found himself sailing above the trees, far out of their reach. One of them was marked, "For a Pit," and the soldier, when he chanced to fall into a deep well through the treachery of his guide, had no difficulty, with the help of the marvellous wings, in getting out again. One of them was marked "For Darkness," and the soldier, when he lost his way in a dark forest, was glad to try all the wings till he found this set, which at once carried him out to the light again. And so by the aid of these wonderful wings the soldier came safely to his journey's end, and accomplished the errand of the great king.

Now, boys and girls, this story is true of each one of you. For the great king is God, and the wonderful box is the Bible, and the wings are God's promises to us. There is a promise in this blessed book for every trouble you may chance to meet along the journey of life. There is a promise for sickness, and one for pain, and one for worry, and another for danger, and another for loneliness, and others for fear and failure and weariness and death. And all you have to do is to take these promises and believe them, and they will at once lift you, like wings; high above all your troubles, into peace and joy and sunshine again.

Is it not worth while to study and read a book that has so many helpful things in it?

THE GREAT BLACK SWAMP

A Story to Teach the Need of Home Missions and Christian Citizenship

ONCE there was a very beautiful city. Its streets were wide and finely paved. Its lawns were green and smooth and covered with beautiful flowers. Its houses were large and richly furnished, and all the people in it were well dressed and happy. There were magnificent churches and splendid schoolhouses. There were libraries and museums and stores of all kinds. A more beautiful and wealthy city it would be hard to find.

But all around this city lay a great black swamp, where the mud was foul and the water above it was fouler, where the trees were festering, and the air stagnant. Here and there throughout this swamp were scattered wretched huts, and the poor people that had to live in them were pale and feeble, and died in large numbers every day. And yet of all this wretchedness the people in the great city took no heed.

One day a plague broke out, starting in one of the finest of the fine houses. It spread slowly at first, and then more rapidly. The doctors were called, and did their best, but their best was useless.

Still faster sped the pest from house to house, slaying the fathers and mothers, and then the little children. They had to establish pest-houses, but

these soon became crowded. They shut up those who were sick in their homes and stationed officers before the doors, letting no one pass in or out, but this did no good. At last they quarantined the entire city, taking the greatest pains to disinfect every person and every object that entered it or passed away from it, but still the plague spread.

Finally they called in a wise man from another town, and what do you think he told them? That all this trouble came from the great black swamp around the city, and from their own carelessness and selfishness in not listening to the cries of the poor people that lived there, and making it, by drainage, a healthy place to live in. The poisonous gases that had arisen from it had entered into all the beautiful homes of the fair city, and killed their thousands.

This story, children, shows you very truthfully the condition of our country. Beautiful though it is, and filled with all kinds of wealth and happiness, there is in it (and not *around* it, as in the story) a great black swamp—the evil lives of many hundreds of thousands that know nothing about Christ, and care nothing about right and purity. From these evil lives is constantly rising a poison, entering into the purest homes, and spoiling with its foulness all the fairness and beauty of our land.

Since this is so, you can see why we should all work and pray for home missions, for they mean

nothing else than clearing out this black swamp, and making the whole country equally pure and clean.

THE WONDERFUL LANTERN

An Object Talk on the Bible

[The speaker should use in his talk a lighted lantern.]

Two boys were once walking in the great Forest of Life. One was George Wise, and the other was George Foolish. They went in at different times, and each was given to carry a wonderful lantern, and was told that its light would be all the help he would need to carry him safely through the forest and to the Palace of the King.

George Foolish, who went in first, walked on and on along a straight and beautiful path until it grew quite dusky. There was a strange light all through the forest, though, and he did not lose his way. In this light he saw what seemed a very beautiful woman.

"Come, my boy," she cried, "and I will show you the pleasantest things you ever saw."

George Foolish followed her, keeping his lantern behind him, as she directed. "For," said she, "it will only confuse you if you use it. This light around you is enough."

Soon they came to a road the most lovely imaginable. Pretty flowers seemed to be springing up on every side, and the trees seemed all abloom, and the birds seemed to sing, and the air

was very fragrant. But walking along that lovely path, all of a sudden it became very dark.

George Foolish started to swing his lantern around, but the lovely lady snatched it from his hand and dashed it on the ground. And then George Foolish felt himself going down, down, down, down. He had been led to a great pit, and had fallen in. That was the end of George Foolish.

To George Wise was given the same kind of lantern, with the same instructions, and he took good care to obey them.

When the lovely lady came up to him he held up his lantern and looked at her sharply. Lo! he saw that her face was really all painted and ugly, and the tips of her fingers were claws, and her feet were hoofs. So he ran away as fast as he could; and the woman did not dare to follow into the circle of the lantern's light.

And then George Wise came to the road that seemed very beautiful in the dim light, with its flowers, and lovely sounds and fragrance. But the lantern sent its rays far down the path, and showed wild beasts behind every tree, and deadly serpents amid the sweet flowers, and at the end the great, black pit into which George Foolish fell.

So George Wise went on his way, walking only where his lantern said was safe, and at last he got to the Palace of the King. Can you guess the name of the lantern, children?

THE MEANING OF DREAMS

[This may be used in connection with the story of Jacob's ladder, or any Bible dream.]

It was two sisters who were talking. "I don't believe in dreams," said Alice. "If I did, I should be dreadfully frightened, for I had such a terrible dream last night. I thought I was in a deep, black wood, and that a great, black snake came upon me, glared at me with his fiery eyes, wrapped himself around me, and dragged me off to his cave under the ground; and just then I woke up. Some people would be scared, and think something terrible was going to happen, but not I, for I don't believe in dreams."

"I don't believe in dreams, either," said her sister Jennie, "but if I did, I should expect something very fine to happen, for I had such a capital dream last night. I thought I was in a great, beautiful meadow, full of flowers, and with birds singing overhead and in the grass. There was a beautiful brook flowing through the meadow, and I thought a lovely little boat came up, rowed by the most beautiful woman I ever saw. She took me on board, and we floated down stream till we came to a splendid palace, and I was just going in when they called me to breakfast."

Here their mother, who had heard everything they said, interrupted Alice and Jennie. "Do you remember, girls," she asked, "that God once talked to people through their dreams, as he

talked to Paul, and Peter, and Jacob at Bethel? He doesn't talk to us in the same way, of course, and yet I think that dreams have their meaning, even yet. Do you know what I thought of, Alice, when I heard you tell your dream? I thought of that party you went to last night. You had a big supper, you know, with lots of cake and pie and candy, and you came home late, and too tired to say your prayers; and besides, you were very angry at one of the girls who had not treated you right, and I rather think that your bad dream was sent to you as a warning, and just as real a warning as the dream that came to Pharaoh in the time of Joseph.

"But your little sister, on the other hand, *she* had a proper supper, and went to bed in proper time; and besides, she went to bed with a laugh and a song and her evening prayer. No wonder she had a happy dream. And it seems to me that her dream was a blessing just as truly as Jacob's angel dream at Bethel. You can tell the other girls about your dreams if you want to, Alice and Jennie."

But the girls thought they wouldn't tell, and so I have told it for them.

JUST BY DOING NOTHING

A Lesson on Thoughtfulness for Others

[This may be used in connection with the story of Cain,—"Am I my brother's keeper?"]

"I'm not hurting my horse," said a rough, hard-faced man, when the agent for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals spoke to him. "Why, I'm not even touching that horse, and I haven't gone near him for an hour."

"That's just what's the matter," said the agent. "You've let him stand out there this bitter weather without a blanket. See! the horse is shivering with the cold. It isn't what you have done, but what you haven't done." And the man was taken before a judge and fined.

"Why, I haven't done anything to Rover," said Johnny one hot day last summer, as his mother began to reproach him. "I went off with the boys, and I haven't seen Rover all day."

"But, Johnny, that's just the trouble. You knew there would be no one left at home, and yet you gave Rover no food or water before you started. When I got home, an hour ago, I found the poor dog almost mad with hunger and thirst. It's often just as bad, Johnny, to do nothing, as to do something very bad."

"Why, how do I harm Helen?" cried Lucy in astonishment, as her Sunday-school teacher began to talk earnestly with her. "I never quarrelled

with Helen in my life, or said a cross or mean word to her."

"Ah, Lucy, my girl," answered the teacher, "that's partly the trouble. You know that Helen is doing wrong and acting very badly, and yet you never say a word to warn her, or try to make her better. It shouldn't be a cross word or unkind word, but you hurt Helen worse by keeping still than if you told her right out what a dangerous thing she is doing."

I want you to see, children,—and from these stories you *do* see, don't you?—that we can be like Cain, and really do great harm, just by keeping still, and not helping when we might help.

FLOWERS IN THE GROUND

A Sermon-Story on Unselfishness

LAST spring there was a company of seeds in my garden. They were the seeds of carnation pinks and sweet-peas. Down in the dark earth, with nothing to look at or to divert their minds, the seeds got to talking to each other.

"What's the use of pushing our way up into the air?" asked the carnation seeds one of another. "What's the use of going up there where the wind will steal our fragrance, where the sun will look harshly at us and wither us away, and where people will pick us and carry us off? Let us be pretty all by ourselves down here below,

keeping our fragrance and our beauty for each other."

"O fie!" exclaimed the sweet-peas who were near by, "we have nothing of such meanness and selfishness. The gardener put us here to grow and be beautiful, and enjoy life for ourselves, and help others to enjoy it. And as for us, we mean to go up into the outer world just as he planned for us."

So up went the sweet-peas and became a beautiful hedge, the glory of the garden all through the summer, the delight of many a sick person, and the joy of all the children.

But as for the carnation seeds, they kept their threat. They grew a little down under the ground, but they sent out only white and ghostly shoots. The rain soaked down upon them, but it produced no flowers, and only served to rot them. The sunshine pierced through the black earth, but it gave them no color, and only served to scorch them. And finally, as a penalty for their selfishness, all of them died down in the ground. "Alas," said the carnation that had proposed the plan, speaking with her last breath, "I have learned that the best way to bless ourselves is to bless others."

THE IMPRISONED RIVER

Or, the Reason Why God Punishes Us

THERE was once a river full of water, bright and sparkling in the sunshine. The river had buoyant spirits, was careless and rollicking. It used to like to leave its banks, and roam off here and there through the woods and over the fields. Sometimes, when the passion seized it, it would swell to an angry flood, burst all barriers, and rage for miles over the country, tearing down trees, destroying the crops, overturning the houses, and drowning hundreds of people. No one can tell the mischief this river did because it would not stay inside its banks.

At last the government of the United States decided to stop all of this evil. Boats were sent with great dredges to deepen the bed of the river. An army of men was set to work with spades to cut trenches and straighten the river where it was crooked. Where the banks were low, great dikes of dirt were built to keep the river in, and where the banks were weak, long stone walls were made to strengthen them. Where the current moved too slowly, jetties were thrown out from the bank to confine the current and make it more swift.

In all of these ways the river was shut in and made to toe the mark. It felt as if it were in a strait-jacket indeed, and mourned like a captive in chains.

But when, after a while, the river saw the farms that it had made desolate covered with rich crops again, and the houses rebuilt that it had torn down, and the villages it had laid waste filled again with happy people, and when it noticed how finely the great boats were now carried along by its deep and regular current, then the river came to be very proud of its great banks, and no longer called them a prison to hem it in, but a home in which it could do the best and happiest work.

So it will be with us, children, if we fling ourselves out of the straight and narrow way which the Father has made for us to walk in. Whatever we do will make us unhappy, and make every one around us wretched. But if we keep in that way, just as the river within its bed at last, we shall learn to be thankful even for the punishments by which God restrains us, when we see how much better are his ways than the ways that we would have chosen.

HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY

A Picture Talk

Obtain a large picture of a boy or a girl, or, still better, draw one on the blackboard. Over this picture pin pieces of paper, concealing the different parts of it, in such a way that the pieces can be removed one by one as the talk proceeds.

First let the speaker say what the ears of the

child can do to make a happy home. They can listen attentively and accurately, so that the child will remember what father and mother say, not forgetting their words of advice and their instructions.

Next, the feet of the picture may be shown. They can run errands quickly; they can dance briskly about the house; they can be quiet when mother has a headache; they can be active in pleasant games.

Then disclose the eyes of our good boy or girl. They will be free from angry tears; they will not look fretful; they will not flash fire; they will be bright and cheery.

Then the hands. Warm they are to be and loving, ready to take up helpful duties, ready to smooth tired foreheads.

The mouth of the child may next be shown,—a mouth not for pouting, not for angry words, not for whimpering; but a mouth for merry laughter, a mouth for kisses, a mouth for kind and gentle words.

And, lastly, remove the paper from the heart. Here is where must live the master of the feet and ears, eyes and hands and mouth; and if all these are to be happy and useful, that Master must be Jesus Christ. If he is in the heart, then the child will be helpful and happy in the home.

THE SCHOOLROOM BATTLE

A Talk about School Temptations

Bessie and Ben were ready to fight the battles of their Master; but they surely did not know when they went to school that morning that the schoolroom was to be a battle-ground, and that they had a struggle—or, rather, several struggles —before them.

Bessie was the first to be attacked. There came up to her an impish little dwarf called Mischief. He urged her to play a trick on the girl in front of her, but Bessie made a vigorous dive into her books, and that scared him away.

Next at Ben there came the big giant Laziness, and tried to draw his book away from him, but Ben set his teeth firmly together, and made a plunge,—not at the giant, but at his slate and his book,—and that drove the giant away.

It was Bessie's turn next, and she was beset by the goblin Carelessness, that tried to get her to throw aside her geography before she had half mastered the lesson. Bessie, however, went back over the pages, and reviewed the lesson diligently, and that was the end of that skirmish.

Ben, in the meantime, had gone up to the recitation benches, and he met there the little brownie called Impudence, who tried to urge him on to be saucy to his teacher; but with the single thought of his teacher's kindness Ben drove the brownie away.

At recess time Bess came pretty near falling in a sharp fight with an ugly little sprite called Selfishness that tried to get her to run away and have fun with a jolly group of playmates. Bess saw through his designs, however, and got the better of him by linking arms with a poor little girl who was unpopular because her clothes were ragged and her shoes out at the toes. She went off with her and had a delightful recess.

While this was going on, Ben was having a tussle in another corner of the playground with an impish little hobgoblin known as Disobedience. The hobgoblin got behind him and tried to push him over the fence into Farmer Johnson's orchard, where he had no business to be, but Ben turned and walked away, and the hobgoblin was defeated.

And so it was that Bessie and Ben came off victorious from this school battlefield, simply because they had Christ in their hearts to help them fight their foes.

HOW THEY ESCAPED

A Bible-Study, with Objects

Come to the meeting prepared with many symbols illustrating some of the most remarkable deliverances described in the Bible. Placing these one by one before the children, ask them of what man or woman each of the symbols reminds them,

and what remarkable escape was brought about through the use of the things shown to the society.

For example, a toy ark will suggest the story of the escape of Noah and his family. A broken chain will lead the children to tell how Peter and Silas were delivered from prison. A bit of board will draw out the story of Paul's escape from the wrecked ship.

A basket will be suggestive of Paul's escape over the wall of Damascus. A sling will be suggestive of the story of David and Goliath. A picture of a lion will lead the children to tell the story of Daniel; the picture of a fire, to relate the account of the three Hebrew children, Daniel's friends; of a shark, to tell of Jonah; while a picture of a lamb will be the symbol for the escape of the Passover.

After the speaker has in this way set the children to thinking about different Bible stories, he may go on to draw out the lessons we should learn from each and all of these remarkable deliverances.

FROM PIT TO POWER

A Blackboard Talk on the Story of Joseph

Ask the children what lad it was that was thrown by his brothers into the pit. When they have answered, draw on the board a simple oval to represent the pit. Then go on to bring out seven sad points in the story of Joseph. Repre-

sent these points by thorn-like triangles rising about the pit like a sharp hedge.

These seven points, as you can elicit them in order, are: Jacob's partiality that brought Joseph so much woe, the envy of his brothers, the slavery into which they sold him, the unjust accusation by Potiphar's wife, the long imprisonment in Egypt, the separation from home, the life spent in a heathen country.

But all of these seven sharp calamities, as cold and merciless as steel, that grew up around this pit into which the poor lad was thrown, Joseph changed to pure gold by his honesty, his faithfulness, his bravery, and his trust in God. As the speaker says this let him go over what he has drawn with yellow chalk, converting the oval pit, with its seven sharp points surrounding it, into a golden crown.

"Now what has happened to Joseph?" let him ask the children. His nobility has transformed his sorrows into a golden glory. He has gone from pit to power. He is next to Pharaoh, able to help his father and his wicked brothers, and all the world beside. Now, children, what lesson do you see in this for us?

WHICH WILL YOU CHOOSE?

A Blackboard Temperance Talk.

FIND two pictures strongly contrasted,—one of a bright young man, the other a decrepit old drunkard. The illustration will be more effective if both are represented standing.

Pin these pictures to the wall or blackboard, and cover each with bits of paper, pinned on separately, so that the parts of the pictures can be disclosed one after the other by removing the pins as the talk progresses.

First ask the children to tell what happens to a young man's nose when he begins to become a drunkard. Uncover the nose of the young man, and next of the drunkard. A little red crayon will make the latter more effective.

In the same way exhibit the change from the clear blue eyes of the young man to the blood-shot eyes of the drunkard; from the young man's frank and hearty lips and clear speech to the drunkard's stammering lips and tripping tongue; from the strong hands of the young man to the drunkard's shaking hands; from the young man's swift feet to the unsteady feet of the inebriate.

Uncovering the heads of the two, talk about the weakening of the brain. Uncovering portions of the clothes, show how the coat has become ragged, and the shoes down at the heel and out

at the toes. Uncovering the pockets, speak about the empty pocketbook, and the vanished fortune. Finally, uncovering the heart, talk about the dulling of conscience and the hardening of all the sensibilities, and the final death of the soul.

As illustrative of the latter, draw beforehand, in front of the young man, a long golden path reaching up to a shining heaven. A door with golden rays will indicate this sufficiently. Draw in front of the drunkard a black, open pit. Uncover these as you talk about the drunkard's fate.

HOW TO SPELL IT

A Talk on Vacations.

GAIN the interest of the children by telling them at the opening of your talk that you are going to give them a spelling lesson, and teach them how to spell the word *vacation.* It is spelled in the first place with a V, which stands for *vigilance.* The vacation will be what God wants it to be, if, in the first place, we watch vigilantly for opportunities of doing good.

Vacation is spelled in the next place with an A, which stands for *activity.* Whatever we mean to do for Christ this vacation we must begin upon at once, not putting it off till the last of August or the first of September.

Next, C—*conscience.* We do not know what kind of vacation God wants us to have. If we

ask him what he would have us do during these summer months, he will tell us through our conscience, and we can be sure that his plan for our vacation will be the happiest.

Another A, which stands for *attractiveness.* Consecrating a thing to God makes it all the more merry, cheery, and sunshiny. Our vacation will not be at all consecrated to God unless it be filled with laughter and bright with smiles.

T—*thoughtfulness.* Do not let your vacation work for Christ be haphazard, taken in a careless way. Things that are worth doing are worth planning to do; and if we are going to make others happier and better this vacation, we cannot do it without a good deal of thought.

The I stands for *interest* in others' happiness. Most vacations are spoiled because we are thinking almost entirely about ourselves, and so, if things do not go just to suit ourselves, our vacation is entirely ruined. We shall not mind it so much if our interest is chiefly for the pleasure of others.

One very important thing for the right kind of vacation for all children will be *obedience,* and that is what the O stands for,—obedience to parents, and elders, and all who know more than we, and are even more anxious than we are that we should have a good time and enjoy ourselves.

The last letter of the word is N, and that stands for the little word, *next.* The whole word *vacation,* you see, implies that we are to do some-

thing for Christ, but that something need not be anything very great. For most of us it will certainly consist of a succession of little things,—something to-morrow, and something more the next day, and the day after that, and the day after that. There is a famous inscription on an old English gravestone, "Doe the nexte thynge." Take that for your vacation motto. Whatever your mind and your conscience tell you that God wants you to do, begin on that, and after you have done it take the next thing, and the next, and you will be astonished to see what a beautiful and happy vacation you will get.

HOW THEY ATE THEIR DINNERS

Some Hints on Bible Study.

Once upon a time six children sat down to eat their dinners, and the way they ate their dinners reminded me very much of the different ways people take to study the Bible. In the first place there was Peter Player, who was in such a hurry to get out to his sport, that he gulped down his dinner in a careless fashion, scarcely conscious that he was eating at all. After that manner I have seen a great many people read their Bibles, their thoughts all the time on the work or the play that was to come after their Bible verses were read.

And then there was Lucy Languid, who sat in

her chair in a lopsided fashion, and ate the dinner with no appetite at all, simply because her mother told her to. I have seen people read the Bible in just that way, without any desire to read it, with no pleasure in it, and simply from a sense of duty. That kind of reading does no good.

Among these six children was also Susie Sweettooth, and all that she ate during the whole meal was sweetmeats,—no health-giving and hearty food. She reminded me of the people who pick out, when they read the Bible, only the familiar parts, and the passages easy to understand. They never think of going outside of one or two of the books, such as John, and Matthew, and the Psalms, though some of the most precious parts of the Bible are in books that are harder to understand.

The fourth of this company was Ralph Rapid. He got through his dinner in almost half the time that the others took, even exceeding the swiftness of Peter Player, but he ate altogether too rapidly. He did not stop to chew his food at all, and of course it could not digest well. The people that read their Bibles after this fashion are those whose eyes glance over the lines, but whose brain takes no thought about them. They read the Bible so hastily that when they get through they cannot tell a thing they have read, and of course the Bible does them no good.

Still another who ate this dinner was Mark Mute. Mark was a very solemn and glum chap,

and all through the meal he did not open his mouth except to put food in it. The rest were talking merrily, and their cheery conversation helped their food to digest, as any doctor can tell you. Do you ever think that it is just as necessary to talk about what you read in the Bible, if you want to remember it, and have it do you good?

The last of the six was Lawrence Lazy. He ate his dinner, and then went off to lie under a tree and sleep. He took no exercise, by way of work or play, to digest his food, and he reminded me of the people who, if they read their Bibles, do not put into exercise what they have learned. The truths that Christ teaches they never think about practising, and of course their Bible-reading does them no good.

All six of these young people, I am sorry to say, ate their dinner without saying grace, without thanking God for their food, and asking him to bless their use of the strength that he would give them. The Bible-reading of a great many people is profitless because of just such a reason as this. They do not pray over it at all.

I do not care very much, boys and girls, about the way in which you eat your dinners, though that is an important matter; but I do care very much about the way in which you read your Bibles. Do you read them like Peter Player, or Lucy Languid, or Susie Sweettooth, or Ralph Rapid, or Mark Mute, or Lawrence Lazy?

THE NEGLECTED BOY

A Christmas Talk

[All of the articles mentioned in this talk may be shown to the children at the proper places.]

THE Neglected Boy saw that the other boys and girls were getting a great many more presents than he received. "Dear me," whined the Neglected Boy; "no one ever gives me anything. No one cares for me, or plans for me, or works for me."

Up then spoke a little sunbeam, which had just touched the boy's cheek. "Why, my boy," said the sunbeam, "I came all the way from the sun just for you."

Up then spoke a pleasant whiff of wind, that strayed in through the open window. "I, my boy," it said, "made the long journey from the Gulf of Mexico just for you."

From Mrs. Wilson's garden at the same time came the scent of a fine rosebush, and the perfume also found a voice, and said, "You poor boy! I have come to console you."

There was an orange on the table. It was the boy's, and it, too, found a tongue. "All the way from California," it said, "I have travelled, my boy, just for your pleasure."

In the boy's hands—for he was about to go to school—was a schoolbook, and the schoolbook spoke up: "I came all the way from Boston, and

hundreds of men and women have worked upon me, and they were all working for you."

There came a noise from the kitchen where the cook was clearing away the breakfast dishes, and some way or other the noise got shaped into words, and the words were, "Remember your breakfast, my lad. Part of it came from Brazil, part of it from Canada, part from China, and part from Africa; and all of these sailors and merchants and steamships and railroads were working for you."

The schoolbell sounded forth, and the boy thought it said, "Come, my boy, here are half a dozen teachers all ready to work for you."

And last of all, something deep down in the boy's heart spoke more loudly than any of the rest, though it was a very quiet voice, and reminded him of his mother and father who were serving him, and of his Father in heaven who loved him.

Do you wonder that the lad ran away quite ashamed of himself, and that, no matter how many presents the other fellows had, he never again called himself "neglected"?

WHAT'S THE USE?

A Sermon-Story to Teach Good Cheer

"WHAT's the use?" asked a sunbeam, when he saw that a dark corner lay in his way. "I can do no good, falling into this dark corner. Why did not the sun send me somewhere else?" But into the dark corner it went, because it was obliged to go there. Ah! what is this bright and sparkling thing that the sunbeam lights upon! It's a diamond that fell yesterday from a lady's ring, and she had been hunting all over the house for it until the fortunate sunbeam showed it to her.

"What's the use," asked a second sunbeam, when he saw that his path was toward a dirty, ugly room in the fifth story of a dirty, ugly house. "There's no use in my going into this miserable room. Why didn't the great sun send me into some place that was fit for me?" Nevertheless, the sunbeam went on, because it was obliged to go on, and fell upon a miserable little plant in a wretched little flower-pot on a rickety little table. This plant was by the bedside of a sick little girl, and was her only treasure. The sunbeam fell on it, and helped it grow, and it soon sent out a beautiful flower, the delight of the sick girl for many a day.

"What's the use?" asked a third sunbeam, as

it saw that a black, cold office lay in its way. "I can do no good in this cold, bare spot. Why did the great sun send me here?" But still in it went, because it was obliged to go there, and it fell across a desk heaped high with business papers. In front of the desk sat a man whose brow was wrinkled and eyes red and hands trembling, and he was evidently greatly troubled by his business. But when he saw the sunbeam, some way or other it reminded him of God's goodness, and he thought of the Sun of righteousness that would rise upon him with healing in his wings.

And this, children, is the lesson of the three sunbeams. Always be gentle and cheery and sunshiny, wherever God sends you. No matter if other people do seem to be harsh and cross and cold. No matter if things do go just exactly the opposite of the way you want them to go. No matter if the place where you are seems black and dark. Remember, it is the dark corners and the ugly houses and the cold rooms that need the sunbeams most of all.

TEMPER—TEMPERED—TEMPERANCE

A Temperance Object Lesson

HERE I have a watch-spring in my hands, children. See how strong the steel is, and especially notice how, if I pull out the spring, it flies immediately back again to the same shape that it had

before. That is because it is well tempered. Swords have been made whose steel was so well tempered that the sword could be bent into a circle, flying back again, when released, to the original shape.

But here is an alcohol lamp, and I will heat the spring in it, letting it cool again slowly. Now see what has happened. All the temper is gone. When I draw the spring out, it doesn't fly back again to its first shape. I can twist it, and turn it, and make it take any shape I please. It has become perfectly useless, you see, for a watch-spring, and is now nothing but a piece of old iron.

Have you ever heard people, as well as swords and watch-springs, spoken of as being *good tempered* or *bad tempered?* Here is a boy who cannot stand even a frown or a harsh word without flying into a passion, or going off into the sulks. Here is another fellow who, though he may get a little red in the face, and have to bite his lips, yet in a minute, for all the harsh words he has heard, he is just as bright and sunny as he was before. This last boy reminds me of the watch-spring. It isn't easy—in fact, it is almost impossible—to make him change his shape, or twist him in any way out of his bright and happy temper. The first boy, on the other hand, is like the watch-spring with its good temper all gone. He can be twisted and bent into ugliness by a single mean word or sneering look.

By this time I think you see, children, a little something of what the word "temperance" means. There is a young man—we will call him Sam—who is asked to have a cigar. "Why yes, thank you," says Sam, "I believe I will"; though he knows that cigars will make him sick, and keep him from doing good work the next day.

But here is Ned, and some one offers *him* a cigar. "You are very kind," says Ned, "but I don't smoke. I find that it isn't good for me. You may treat me to soda-water, if you want to, though." Which of these boys was *tempered?* Which of these boys, that is, was practising *temperance?*

Sam, in short, is a great deal like putty. He is ready to receive any impression, and accept any suggestion. Invited to take a drink of wine, he has no thought of refusing, though he is afraid of the wine, and knows just what mischief is in it. Invited to play a game of cards, or go to the theatre, or enter bad company, or read a bad book, it is all the same. He has no *temper* to resist; that is, he is *intemperate,* and before he is many years older, Sam's life will be all dented and twisted this way and that, ugly, and weak, and useless.

But Ned, on the other hand, without offending any one, and in a manly, straightforward way, simply keeps his life to the true shape that God marked out for him, refusing to let evil men bend

him into their evil courses. And that is what I mean when I say that Ned is *temperate*.

HOW TO DO IT AND HOW NOT TO DO IT

A Simple Little Talk on Friendship

I KNOW a girl who is very anxious to have a host of friends. She will wheedle and coax her companions, and make them many presents. She runs after them, and gets up nice parties for them. When she sees a group of them, she presses her way in. She is always asking them to play with her and study with her. She is interfering in all their plans, offended if omitted from any party, and jealous if any girl she wishes to make her friend has any friend but herself.

And yet, so selfish is she about it all, and so little does she understand how to make friends, that the other girls dislike her and run away from her. They even make fun of her, and speak of her as impudent and forward. Besides, they call her jealous and mean-spirited, and yet they are careful and considerate of her feelings, and try to keep her from knowing what they think of her.

I know another girl who does not even think whether she has many friends or not. This girl, to tell the truth about it, hardly uses the word *friend* at all, except in speaking and thinking about her one great Friend, who is Jesus her Saviour. In everything she is trying to please

him. When he tells her, as he often does, to help this girl who needs help, she gives the aid quickly and gladly. When he asks her to give some little present to a girl who has few things of the sort, when he asks her to amuse some one who is downcast, or walk with some one who is lonely, or study with some one who is stupid, she obeys, because she wants to. She is glad to have her friends have a host of friends also. She enjoys their pretty things as much as if they were her own. She is not a beautiful girl, but her face is so bright that every one thinks her beautiful. She is always ready to join with others in sport and work, and yet never sulks when she is left alone. She has her one great Friend, you see, and so she is never really alone.

And so every one loves her, and every one is her friend. They love her for the Christ in her, and for herself. She is always in demand, and is admired everywhere she goes.

In which way, boys and girls, will you seek to make friends?

THE SONGS THAT WENT TO HEAVEN

A Talk about the Way to Sing.

Seven songs once went up to heaven, and on their way they fell to talking with each other. Said the first song, "The one who sung me did not understand a word she was singing, but her

heart was full of love and joy, and she sung because she wanted to praise God and tell others how happy she was. I am sure that they will be glad to welcome me in heaven."

Said the second song, "It wasn't a good voice that sung me, but the owner did not seem to care for that. She sung with all her heart, because she thought her voice was needed, and she knew the song would help others. They will be glad to see me up above, I am sure."

"My singer," put in the third, "didn't feel at all like singing when she began, but she did not like to keep silent when all were singing around her, and very soon, as she thought what the beautiful words meant that she was singing, she fell to singing because she liked to, and had hard work to stop. I shall be welcome, also."

Softly said the fourth song, "The singer from whom I came sung me with a prayer in her heart that the words she was uttering might help some one, and I am sure the Father will be glad to see me."

Then the fifth song spoke. "I am sure that the boy who sung me understood every word he was singing, his eyes were so bright, and there was such a noble expression on his face. He sung me because he had made his own the words of the hymn. I shall be received with joy, I know."

But the sixth song and the seventh hung their heads. "I was sung by a girl who was vain and

proud," said the sixth. "All the time she was singing, she was thinking how well she looked, what a fine voice she had, and hoping that her voice was heard above the rest, and that people would look at her. I am afraid they will not even admit me to heaven."

"And I," said the seventh song, its head drooping still lower, "was sung carelessly. The boy who sung me was looking around all the time and thinking of his sport for the morrow. Not a thought did he give to the beautiful words he was singing. I am afraid that they will not care to see me in heaven."

Now which of these seven songs, children, came from you?

THE WAY TO THE PRESIDENCY

A Talk about "Thy Kingdom Come."

[When this talk is used in English lands, substitute Liberal and Conservative for the names of parties, and Member of Parliament for President.]

It will help the children to understand how the kingdom of heaven comes if you draw a parallel between that and a presidential election. How do men go to work to bring in the rule of their party? In the first place, if you are a member of a party, you are not ashamed of the name of the party, but you delight to call yourself, and to be called, a stanch Republican, or a loyal Democrat,

or a zealous Populist, or a faithful Prohibitionist. In the same way the kingdom of heaven is to be brought in by people who are not ashamed to be known as followers of Christ, but who glory in it.

The presidency comes, too, through talking about the party candidates. The Republicans and Democrats are each proud of the men they are running for office, and cannot say too much in their praise. The kingdom of heaven also will be brought in by men who are all the time talking about the Lord of that kingdom.

A party is also brought into power through pushing the measures advocated by that party. The Democrats get the presidency by arguing for free trade, and the Republicans by arguing for protection. After the same manner the kingdom of God will come on the earth through the zeal of Christ's followers in urging upon men Christ's commands and precepts.

No political party can endure very long unless its members try continually to get fresh members for the party, and so it is with the kingdom of heaven. Its coming will be hastened chiefly by those who are all the time seeking to get young and old, rich and poor, into the church.

A zealous Republican or Democrat is all the time thinking about the good of his party, preparing arguments for it, and seeking to demolish the arguments of its enemies. A Christian in the same way will study up points for Christianity, and will be able to show just why he be-

lieves in it and wants others to believe in it. That is one way of helping on the coming of Christ's kingdom.

The votes that bring in Christ's kingdom are very different from the votes that bring in a presidency. Christ's votes are written on the hearts and lives of men, and every letter is a noble deed.

It is hard work to elect a president, and certainly the kingdom of God is not coming any easier. Indeed, as that kingdom is far more valuable and important than any earthly kingdom, *we* can be sure, boys and girls, that it will take hard work and constant thought and most heroic living to bring it to the earth. And yet there is not a boy or girl in all the world that cannot help bring in this kingdom, and help greatly, too, if he will simply do his best, and follow the commands of his great Leader.

JOIN THE ARMY

An Illustration of Why Children Should Join the Church.

THERE was once a very great king who commanded a magnificent army. And the strangest thing about the army was that the king insisted that young children should be admitted to it. His officers sometimes objected, but that did little good. The children cannot carry muskets," said

they. But the king answered this objection by furnishing them with powerful pistols.

"They cannot march with the soldiers," insisted the officers. "Well," answered the king, "then they shall have carriages and horses."

"They will not be able to stand the exposure," urged the officers. "Why," replied their master, "with all my soldiers to protect them, they will be in the safest place in the world for them."

"But they will make many blunders, and our foes will laugh at us." "The enemy will not laugh," answered the king, "when my children fire their pistols."

"But they will hinder the army and confuse all our manœuvres." On the contrary, the king insisted, "their songs will cheer my soldiers, and make them fight more bravely and march more swiftly."

"But the children cannot understand the commands of the officers," persisted these older soldiers. "Why, my dear sirs," said the king, "the ears of children are much sharper than those of their elders, and when well taught they are quick to obey. Indeed, my officers," said this great king, "the children love me, and I love them. I want them in my army, and I must have them, to fight for me, and be protected by me and you."

This great king, children, is Jesus Christ, and the army is his church.

"O, I WISH ——."

A Conversation Talk on Envy.

BESS was talking with her Aunt Kate. "O, I wish," said she, "that I were Lucy Waldron. What a lovely face she has! Every one admires her beauty. And then what superb dresses! and what fine books she has to read!—the very latest story books, in the prettiest bindings. And her father has just given her a new pony; she drives it every day. And then the parties she gives! and the fine house she has to live in! Everything a girl could possibly wish for. O, I wish I were Lucy Waldron."

Aunt Kate laughed. "Why, Bess," said she, "haven't you noticed the expression on Lucy's beautiful face? Would you care to have her frowns in place of your freckles, even if her pretty complexion were thrown in?"

"Why, no," said Bess; "I want her features without the expression she gives them, of course."

"And then those lovely dresses of hers," continued Aunt Kate; "they are all made by a dressmaker, you know, partly because she is rich, and partly because she has no mother to make them for her. The dresses your mother makes for you are not quite so fine, but you have your mother to make them. Would you trade her for Lucy's dresses?"

"Why, Aunt Kate!" cried Bess, reproachfully.

"And then those handsome books of hers. Where does she stand in her classes?"

"Why, at the foot, almost always," said Bess.

"You surely wouldn't trade your bright mind for her dull one, though you got all her fine books to boot, would you?"

"Certainly not. I should want to keep my brain, and have her books to read, too."

"And then Lucy's pony. Her father gave it to her, you know, to get her outdoors, and try to bring some roses into her pale cheeks. Would you exchange your health for her pony? I am sure you would not. And as to her large parties; does she make many friends by them?"

"Why, no; there is hardly a girl in school who has so few friends."

"While you, Bess, have throngs of friends around you wherever you go, even if you do give very few parties. And Lucy's fine house, with its soft carpets, and gay mirrors, and magnificent pictures, and lots of servants, is a gloomy place to her because there is no love in it. Why, I am certain that if you were transplanted to that home you wouldn't have a happy day."

"No," agreed Bess; "I should be perfectly miserable, of course, without you there, and mother, and father, and the rest of us. I wouldn't change with Lucy for anything. I am ashamed of myself. I will stop envying Lucy, and I really believe that I ought to pity her."

HALF A DOZEN PRAYERS

Illustrations of False and True Ways of Praying

Two prayers once went up to heaven together. One was a blundering prayer, awkward and poorly shaped. This prayer did not even ask for the right things. If God had granted it just as it was prayed, the one who prayed it would have suffered all manner of evil. But it was an earnest, loving prayer, and the heart of the one who prayed it really wanted God to do with her just what was best.

The second prayer that went up with this first was a perfectly correct and smooth prayer. The words were all right, and the things asked for were all right, and no fault could be found with the shape of it. And yet the prayer came from a cold heart, and no love went into the making of it. So when these prayers came up together to God, which one do you think, children, he accepted and gave an answer to?

At another time two more prayers ascended together to the Father. One was a long prayer and a very beautiful one. Every sentence was eloquent, and it sounded almost like a noble poem. And yet the man who prayed the prayer put nothing but brains into it, and was thinking while he prayed not of the Father to whom people thought he was praying, but of the people who were listening.

At that same meeting, and almost at the same time, a short and stammering prayer was prayed. The sentences were ungrammatical, and scarcely one of them was even complete. But the prayer came from a true and tender spirit, one very humble and trusting, anxious to do everything to please her Saviour, willing to pray even a stammering prayer right after such an eloquent one. Now as these two prayers went up together to heaven, which do you think received a welcome there?

Every night, at just the same time, from a little house I know of, two prayers of two sisters go up together to God's throne. They never fail, either of them, and they are about of the same length, and they have almost the same words in them, and in the same order. But one of them is mumbled carelessly, and the girl is not thinking of what she is saying, but is remembering some event of the day or planning some pleasure for the morrow.

Her sister's prayer is almost the same so far as the words go, yet it is earnest and thoughtful, and she knows what she is saying, and means every word of it. Which of these prayers does the Father hear? Here are six prayers, boys and girls. Which of them are yours?

VERTICAL SPELLING

A Talk for the Sunday School

Ask the children how many of them can spell "Sunday school." When hands go up and they spell the words, tell them you are going to spell it in a new way. Then proceed to spell it in this fashion:—

Singing.
Urging others to come.
No faultfinding.
Doing your especial duty.
Attention.
Yielding yourselves to Christ.
Studying your lesson.
Coming yourself.
Helping teacher.
Obedience.
On time.
Learning all you can.

Do not take up the words in this order, but in a more natural order, and talk a little on each point,—or, better, get the children to talk,—before you write it down. You children can help the Sunday school, and get help from it, by studying your lesson, coming yourselves, coming on time, urging others to come, singing heartily, paying attention, learning all you can, obeying teacher, helping teacher, doing your especial

duty, and not finding fault; most of all, by yielding yourselves to Christ, who alone can make the Sunday school a happy and helpful place for you.

WHAT ARE YOU WORTH?

A Dialogue-Sermon on What We Owe to Christ

MOTHER was talking to John. "What are you worth, John?" asked she.

John looked up rather indignantly. "Why, what do you mean, mother?" he asked.

"If any one wants to find out what he is worth, he must know what he owes and what he has to pay with, mustn't he?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said John, thoughtfully.

"Well, then, I wonder if you are not in debt, and pretty heavily in debt, to Christ. Let's see. In the first place, did your clothes cost you nothing,—not only the clothes you are wearing, but all your other clothes?"

"But I got these from you," said John, "and not from Christ."

"Yes," replied his mother, "but it was Christ who made it possible for me to give them to you, and your clothes for all your life have certainly cost two hundred dollars."

"Whew!" exclaimed John; "all that?"

"And then, how about your food? How many dollars' worth do you eat in the course of a year? And then this house,—you have a share in that; and what did the house cost?"

"But you give me the food," said John, "and this is your house."

"Yes, but it was Christ who made the food in the first place, and gave it to me to give to you, and the same with the house. And then, there is your school. That large building some one had to pay for, and the teachers, and your school-books. All of these cost money, and you owe for them, do you not? because you have never paid for them. And how many thousand dollars do you think it all counts up? It costs a good deal, you see, to build a little boy into a man."

"Yes, I should say so," said John.

"But that is not half all," said his mother. "This town has to be managed partly for you. There must be police to keep it safe for you, the streets must be lighted, and the sidewalks kept up, and a thousand other things that cost money must be done partly for you."

"I never thought I was so expensive," sighed John.

"But," his mother went on, "there are things that are worth much more than all the gold in the world. There is your health, that no doctor could give you if you lost it, though we paid him ever so much. There is the sun, better than all the gas-lights the town furnishes. There is the rain, that makes the food grow before it comes to us. There are the animals, that give us the clothes that we give to you. And, best of all, and more wonderful than all put together, there is

the great love of Christ, which built the church for you, and keeps this home warm and cheery for you, and makes this town safe for you, and prepares a work for you to do in the world. And remember that all of these things for which you are so deeply in debt come, in the first place, from Christ, without whom, as the Bible says, nothing was made that has been made."

"Then I owe all that?" said John. "How can I ever pay it?"

"You can never pay it," his mother answered. "But there is one thing you can give to Christ with which he will be perfectly satisfied, and that is,—yourself. He will take care of all this great debt of yours, and he has already taken care of it without your asking him. And now you can see, my boy, how little you are worth, and what you must do to become worth something."

THE FOOLISH BOAT

A Sermon-Story on Surrender to Christ

THERE was once a foolish little boat that did not dare give itself up to the river. The river called it coaxingly and promised to take good care of it, but the boat would not venture from the shore.

At last the boat dared to move half-way out from the shore. "But," said the river, "I can't carry you that way. You must give yourself up to me entirely."

At length the boat became more bold, and ventured to trust itself to the river, but insisted on having a rope, which held it fast to a tree on the bank. Of course that was no better than before. The boat turned and swung in the eddies of the river, but it got not an inch further toward the ocean.

At length, as the river urged it, and promised safety, the boat ventured to let go of the rope; but at the same time, to make himself perfectly safe, the boat let down a great anchor to the bottom of the river. And then, though the boat seemed to be giving itself up entirely to the current, and though it swayed back and forth a little more, it got no farther, on the whole, than it was at the start.

But finally, after days of pleading, the boat ventured to let go of the anchor, and trust itself entirely to the river, and it was carried safely on, past hundreds of beautiful scenes, till at last it came to the great ocean that it was longing to see.

This boat, children, was not more foolish than many a boy and girl who expects Christ to carry him to the great ocean of happiness and peace, and yet who will not give up to Christ. There are lots of boys and girls—yes, and big men and women, too—who are resting on the banks, half on, half off, and wondering why they do not get further down the stream. And there are others who are tied to some worldly business, or anchored to some selfish pursuit, and not even the

strong current of Christ's love can tear them loose.

The only way, children, is to yield yourselves up entirely to Christ, being sure that you will be safer in that way than in any other, and that he will carry you without harm into the great ocean of all joy.

FORT BAD HABIT

A Blackboard Talk

[Draw on the board the picture of the two forts. Use bright red for one and ugly brown or brick color for the other.]

Did you know, children, that you have lived right by a fort, every day of your lives? You have. It is called Fort Bad Habit; and from that fort they are sending out parties all the time to attack you.

Captain Laziness is one of the officers of the fort. Haven't you often had an attack of laziness? His favorite time for an attack is in the morning, when the rising-bell rings, but he is likely to make an onset almost any time.

Then there is General Meanness. He is one of the officers of the fort, also. He has led a charge against you often, I am sure; and whenever you get cross and out of sorts, it is because you are captured by General Meanness, and he has carried you off to Fort Bad Habit.

Corporal Vanity, too, lives in that fort. He attacks you with a looking-glass, and binds you fast with ribbons in a network of laces, and carries you off to Fort Bad Habit before you quite know what has happened to you.

Major Mad is up in that fort, too. Every time you get angry, he has you. He keeps prodding you with his long bayonet, and gets you madder and madder, until you are completely under his control.

No chance to be brave for Christ? Why, up in the Fort Bad Habit there are enough *enemies* of yours to keep busy any soldier that ever lived, from Cæsar to Grant! You have been beaten by them many and many a time, and often, I fear, you give up to them after a single battle.

There's only one safe way, and that is to take refuge in a great, strong fort, called Fort Good Habit. Christ himself commands this fort, and if you are a soldier under him, you will not be defeated.

THE CROWN

Or How to Seek Happiness

[Illustrate this with a pretty gilded crown, made of pasteboard, or drawn on the blackboard in yellow.]

Once upon a time a kind and powerful ruler offered to give the gold crown of happiness and the kingdom that belongs to it to any one who would ask for it in the right way. Four people thought they would try for it one day.

The first of these was Master Vanity. He told the king, in a very pompous way, that he wanted the crown. Then he spent the rest of the day in decking himself out in rich robes, in silks and in laces, that he might be dressed suitably for the coronation. But some way the king never sent for him to receive the crown.

The second of these was Miss Selfish. She was afraid some one else would find out what she was about and ask to go with her and get a share of the crown and kingdom of happiness; so she went in great secrecy, all by herself, and told the king her desire. Then she kept away from all the rest, chuckling to herself, and planning how she could enjoy her kingdom without permitting any one else to enjoy it with her. But some way the king never sent for her, either.

Then there was Harry Headstrong. He went boldly to the king and told him that he would take the crown, never doubting that he would get it. The rest of the day he swaggered about, ordering every one around, and acting as if the crown were already on his head. He allowed no one to have his own way, but insisted on dictating just how all things should go. But the crown never came to him, for all he was so lordly.

But the fourth of these was Lucy Loving. She modestly told the king that she should like the crown and kingdom of happiness, but she did not tell him what she intended to do with them when she got them. She was going to divide

them among her dear ones at home, and all her friends, and she had many friends. She couldn't bring herself to keep any part for herself. Well, Lucy Loving went away and forgot all about the crown and kingdom, so busy was she all day doing kind and helpful things and thinking loving thoughts. Toward sunset some one stepped up to her and hailed her as "Queen Lucy," She felt on her head and found there a beautiful gold and diamond crown. Indeed, she had had the crown of happiness all day, and all day she had been living in the kingdom of happiness. And, children, there is just such a crown and such a kingdom for each one of you, if you will ask for it in the way Lucy did.

SUCH A HARD TIME

A Dialogue-Talk, to Teach Contentment

[In giving this, the speaker may find it well to add to the number of illustrations.]

"O DEAR! O dear! O dear!" cried Jack, "I do have such a hard time. Now mother won't let me go coasting, and all because I have a little sore throat. As if a fellow could take more cold, exercising all the time. I do think I have the hardest time in the world!"

"Tut, tut, tut!" said Uncle John, who happened to hear this ridiculous statement. "Did you ever hear of Mr. Hodgkins, Jack?"

"Why, yes, of course, Uncle John. Why, I pass his house every day going to school."

"Well, you know, then, Jack, for you have seen him at his window, that for forty years he has not been out of that room, and he has to be carried from his bed to his chair, and from his chair to his bed again. And yet he bears it all so patiently,—but then, to be sure, he well may, for he can say to himself, 'I haven't the hardest time in the world; Jack has!'"

Jack looked confused.

"And then," his uncle continued, "do you know Gertrude Wilson?"

"Gertrude Wilson, the girl who keeps the little candy shop? Why, I buy candy there out of my pocket money almost every week. Of course I know Gertrude Wilson."

"Well, then you may have heard how Gertrude once lived in that fine stone house where Judge Merriweather lives now, and how her father lost his health, and then his money, and then her mother died; and now they live in a mean little house, and Gertrude has a very hard time to support the family. But, as she hasn't as hard a time as Jack, it's no wonder that she is so patient through it all!"

"O Uncle John!" cried Jack, putting his hand on his uncle's mouth, "you needn't say a word more. I didn't mean what I said,—or, rather I *did* mean it, but I didn't think. Why, *of course* I know dozens and dozens of people who have a

harder time than I ever had or ever thought of having."

"Even if your mother won't let you coast for fear of your making your throat worse?"

But Jack ran away, too much ashamed of himself to answer.

A QUEER ORDER TO GIVE

A Little Christmas Talk

Suppose, children, you could go to old Father Time and order a merry Christmas. "Father Time," you would say, approaching the aged gentleman with his hour-glass and scythe, "Please send me, Father Time, on December 25, a merry Christmas."

"There are lots of different kinds of Christmasses," Father Time may answer, "and each one of them is called 'merry' by some people. How will you have yours? How shall I make it up?" Father Time will speak just as if you were ordering a dress or a coat.

And now, I know what some of you boys and girls would say, if you could order a merry Christmas in this manner. You would ask Father Time to throw in lots of candy and nuts and oranges, not forgetting toys and turkey and a sled and a well-filled Christmas tree, and a good many of you, too, would want lots of books.

But, after all, though Father Time might send you an ocean full of all these things, the wise old

man would probably shake his head and say, "Those children are not getting the merry Christmas they want, after all."

How might you order it to make sure of getting what you want? I will tell you.

"Father Time," you would say, "put into my Christmas lots of kindness and love, a plenty of gratitude, merry songs, lots of kisses,—not candy, but real ones,—a plenty of unselfishness, and the spirit of sharing with those that have less than I have."

Father Time will say, "Why, that is a pretty heavy order, boys and girls. You have ordered a finer Christmas than most people ask for, and I must turn over my stock most carefully to get what you want; but if you really want it, and will do your part toward getting it, I will do my part, and you will not be disappointed. You will be sure, children, to get the merry Christmas which you have ordered."

THE YEAR OF BLESSINGS

A New Year's Blackboard Talk

THE following blackboard exercise will prove a good way to get the children to think about the past year. Separate the blackboard into twelve divisions, one division for a month. Write on each division the name of a month, and place in each a picture emblematic of that month. April,

for instance, may show a shower, or an umbrella. November may show a turkey, July a flag. These pictures may be cut from an almanac, or any illustrated paper, and pinned or pasted on, or, if the superintendent has skill in this line, little sketches may be drawn on the blackboard in the presence of the society.

Then, looking backward over the year, set the children to thinking about some of the blessings that came to them in each month. In July their play-time began. In September came their school. November may suggest nice things to eat; August, nice things to wear. The month of Christmas may suggest the love of their dear ones, and blustering March may suggest the comforts of home.

After the months are filled out in this way, take a look forward over the next year, and ask the boys and girls what gift for God, who has given them all these things, they will plan for each month of the coming year. Ask them to put one gift in each division, and place the gifts where they will be brought into appropriate connection with the blessing already written down. These gifts will be such things as love and faithfulness, honesty and cheerfulness, working and singing and studying.

THE KING WHO INSISTED

A Sermon-Story on Obedience

THERE was once a great king, who ruled over a very quarrelsome people. This was their chief fault, but it was a terrible one, because they were all the time fighting with each other, often by words, but even more frequently by blows. So the king made a law forbidding, under severe penalty, all such disputing. But the people paid no attention to his law.

Now the strangest thing about it was, that the people were very fond of their king. Wherever he went, magnificent triumphal arches were set up across his way, and bands and processions went out to meet him. Still the people kept up their quarrelling, and the king would not look at their triumphal arches and processions until they chose to obey his law.

The people satisfied themselves with obeying all other laws, but the king said, "You have no particular desire to disobey these other laws, and I shall not believe that you love me, no matter how much you say about it, until you obey this law which you are inclined to break."

But the people were, indeed, very fond of their king. They sent him magnificent presents. They hung up his picture everywhere. They shouted out songs expressive of their loyalty. They named their towns and their buildings after him,

and their orators spoke many fine orations in his honor.

But the king would have nothing to do with all of these expressions of their affection, and continually repulsed them, until at last they stopped their quarrelling with each other, and became peaceable and obeyed the king's law.

Now was the king right, children? Of course you all believe that he was. The king is Jesus, and this story tells you just how he feels when you do wrong. You may say you love him all you please, but he will look at your deeds, rather than your words, and he will answer, "Show your love first by obeying me."

THE STRANGE THING THAT HAPPENED TO JACK

A Talk for Thanksgiving Day

"WHAT in the world have I to be thankful for?" asked Jack, as Thanksgiving Day came near.

All of a sudden there stood before him a beautiful being, whom Jack thought to be a fairy grown large, but she wasn't. She was an angel, a Thanksgiving angel.

"I know one thing you should be thankful for," she said, "and I will show you, Jack." Reaching out her hand she touched Jack on the eye.

"Oh! oh!" cried Jack, for he found that, although his eyes were wide open, he could not see a single thing, not even the angel who had blinded him. Jack had learned one thing to be thankful for.

In terror Jack started to run away, but the angel spoke. "Ah, Jack, I know something else you have to be thankful for." So she stooped down quickly, and touched Jack's feet. Jack came to a sudden stop. He found himself absolutely unable to move. So Jack had found something else to be grateful for.

Our little lad thought that something was holding him, and, not being able to see, he reached down to feel his feet to see how he was held. "Ah," said the Thanksgiving angel, "I see you have something else to be grateful for." So she touched Jack's hands, and Jack suddenly found that he had lost the power of feeling. Grope as he might, he couldn't touch anything.

With this Jack began to cry and scream. He was indeed in a terrible plight. "Why," said the angel, "how many things you have to be thankful for! There is one thing I had quite forgotten." So she touched Jack's lips, and Jack all of a sudden became absolutely mute, unable to scream or to say a word.

"Can you hear me, Jack?" asked the angel. "I know you can, and so you still have one thing, at any rate, to be thankful for, even though you are blind, and crippled, and dumb, and without

the power of touching anything. You still can hear good advice; but even that you may not be able always to hear, for you may not always have it. And here is a bit of good advice. Don't forget, Jack, how many things you have to be thankful for."

With that the angel went away, and all of a sudden Jack found that he could see and move and touch and speak just as before. And wasn't he a more grateful boy? And didn't he enjoy that Thanksgiving Day?

A VERY UNUSUAL DINNER

An Object Lesson for Thanksgiving Day

THE speaker will bring a basket whose contents are mysteriously covered with a white cloth. Spreading a table-cloth upon the table, let him tell the children that he will set before them a Thanksgiving dinner; a dinner not of things to eat, but a dinner of things that will remind them for what they ought to be thankful,—a genuine Thanksgiving dinner. As he speaks, let him take out the articles one by one.

The first will be, possibly, a cup with nothing in it. But hold! there *is* something in it. It is full of air, as the children will tell him, and air is one of the commonest blessings, and one that we are most likely to forget to give God thanks for.

Taking out a candle, the speaker will light it and set it on the table. This will remind the children of the blessing of light. A lump of coal will represent the blessing of heat; a beautiful picture, the blessing of sight; a bottle of pills, or a little crutch, will remind them, by the principle of opposites, of their own health, which does not need any such thing. Two photographs, one of a man, the other of a woman, will stand for father and mother, and the dear ones at home. There must be a little coat to remind them of their nice clothes; an apple, to represent their food; a toy house, for their homes; and last,—and best of all, a Bible, to stand for Christ and all that he is to them.

As these articles are brought forth from the basket, they are to be placed upon the table, arranged as for dinner, and at the close the children may gather around the table, while the speaker offers a prayer of thanksgiving. Then let all sing a thanksgiving hymn.

BILLY AND THE HORSESHOE NAILS

An Illustration of Disobedience

[This is a famous old story, with an important addition to fit it to our present purpose.]

Once upon a time there was a blacksmith who had, to help him, a lazy boy called Billy. One day the blacksmith saw that he was out of horse-

shoe nails, and he sent Billy in a hurry to the nearest town to buy some.

But Billy was never known to be in a hurry. He loitered along the road, playing games and talking with all the boys he met, and at last, coming across Jack Emptyhead, his boon companion, he so far forgot his errand as to accept Jack's invitation to go fishing with him.

In the meantime, there came to the blacksmith's shop a cavalryman riding a horse that had cast his shoe. The horseman was a very important officer, and was riding very fast to reach the army before a certain great battle that was soon to be fought. His horse had begun to limp, however, and he saw that, unless something was done, the battle would be ended before he could catch up with the army.

You may imagine his despair when he found that our blacksmith had no horseshoe nails. He was compelled to plod on as best he could, for there was no other blacksmith shop for miles around. But his horse grew lamer and lamer, and the battle was over long before he reached the spot.

Now this officer was so very important that because he was not there his side lost the battle. And because the battle was lost, the country was lost for which his army was fighting. So you see that because of the disobedience of a single little boy the officer was kept from joining his army, and the army was kept from winning the battle,

and the great country was lost to its rightful king.

Do you think this a strange story? It is a very true one. To be sure, just these things may never have happened, but just as important things are coming to pass every day from some one's obedience or disobedience in very small matters. The world is all so closely bound up together, my boys and girls, that you never can guess how much misery may be caused by the very smallest little fault committed by the very smallest little boy or girl.

THE FOUR STATUES

An Illustration of Sincerity

In the public square of a certain great city four beautiful statues were once placed on exhibition. They were by four different artists, and each of these was eager to win honor from the people. All four of the statues shone in the sun like pure gold, and they were all indeed beautiful to look upon, so that the people could not tell which to choose.

But as they gazed, the sun chanced to shine out more brightly, and lo, one of the statues, which had many admirers, began to melt away in the sun's rays, and it was at once discovered that the statue thought to be of pure gold was really molded in nothing but butter! Ah, what

a cry of angry ridicule rose against the luckless artist!

Of the three statues that were left on view, there was one that had as many admirers as the butter statue, and they urged the claims of their favorite for a long time. Gradually, however, every one ceased to do honor to this statue, for it began to get stained and corroded in a shameful manner that was very mysterious, until some one discovered that the supposed golden statue was really made of nothing more precious than brass!

Of the two statues remaining it was hard to say which was the finer. Some were for one and some for the other, until, after some years, a bold fellow who dared to scrape off a bit from each statue, found that one of them was merely plated, while the other was pure gold.

Then it was that the people tore down from their place in the public square the brass and the plated statues, the butter statue having left nothing of itself to tear down. They permitted none of those cheats to occupy that place of honor, but the statue all of pure gold they kept in full view of strangers and foreigners all the time, and often pointing to it they told the story I have just told to you. And almost always when he got through telling the story the narrator would add a bit of a moral.

"Shams," he would say, "do not pay in the long run. If you want people to give you real

honor you must give them real worth. Be butter, or brass, or plated metal, and sooner or later men will discover the imposition. The only true and safe way, if you want men to honor you as they honor gold, is to be gold—pure gold—all the way through." Do you understand the point of my little story, boys and girls?

THE BLACK PLAGUE

A Story about Anger and Its Results

Once there was a great king who ruled over all the countries of the world. He possessed wonderful art, and was able to do with men whatever he pleased. One time he was especially grieved over the harsh words and angry thoughts of his people, and he caused a proclamation to be made among all the kingdoms of the world, declaring that for every angry or fretful word that men should speak a black spot should come upon their faces.

The decree went into effect at once, and the results were most astonishing and pitiful. The people, though they tried, could not change their natures, for they had been talking hatefully and indulging in angry thoughts for too many years. Some whose tongues were especially spiteful found their faces all covered with little pin points of black, as if they were tattooed. Others, more ugly than spiteful, looked in their mirrors and be-

held great smooches of black covering now an eye and now a cheek, and in others a chin, or a nose, but most often the lips.

The most fearful disfigurement of all was upon those who became deeply passionate, so that their hearts were filled with thoughts of murder. Inky blackness came upon their faces, however fair they were before, and rapidly spread as the angry words poured out of their mouths, until their whole faces were black as ebony.

There were others, on the contrary, whose hearts were not very passionate, but were filled with gloom, so that they were sullen and morose, and upon them the charm acted like a veil of darkness, spreading over their features slowly but surely, as if they were in a shadow.

When the people of the world saw, by looking in their mirrors and in one another's faces, what a fate had come upon them, they were seized with a terrible fear. They flew to their toilet basins and rubbed and scrubbed, using all kinds of soap and ointments, but in vain; and many of them became still more angry when they discovered this,—angry with themselves, but most of all with the great king. And the angrier they grew, the blacker became their faces.

At length all the people of the world came together at the great king's court, their lamentations and their prayers making a mighty clamor. The king came out to them, and told them, speaking lovingly, how through all those years before

his proclamation their angry words and spiteful thoughts had been making spots upon their souls as black and ugly as those they now saw upon their faces. All of this the people well knew, but had cared nothing about it. They were just now beginning to care when they saw their faces spoiled.

And the king told them that there was only one way by which their faces could be made fair and beautiful again. If each of them truly repented of all his harshness and passion, and did the best he could to see what was good in others, and to get in himself a bright and sunny temper, then, in time, the black spots would disappear.

And so it was that, filled with shame, all the people of the world went back to their homes, and went to work to whiten their faces again. It took many, many months, and it was the most difficult of tasks, but after some years, so faithfully did they work that there were few indeed in all the world that had not become fair in face as the angels, and cheery and sunny as a day in June.

THE KEYS

A Sunday-School Talk

[Illustrate this with a big bunch of keys, of many sizes and shapes.]

All our lives, children, we are like a man walking through a vast house, with many long

passages from which open many doors. Every day has a door, and so has every duty and every sorrow and every joy, every trial and every obstacle and every success.

And all of these doors are locked tight. We may batter down the doors as some people do, but how much better it is quietly to open them with the proper keys! Now those keys are Bible verses.

Do you know that there is a Bible verse for the especial trials and tasks and joys of every day, if you only know where to find it? Somewhere in the Bible is a little golden key that will fit into just the keyhole that is before you at this moment, I care not what it is. You may have a hard lesson to get; the Bible has a key to it. You may be grieving over a great trouble; the Bible has a key that will open the door and let you out into a happier room. Whatever may be your difficulty, you can find a key for it somewhere in this wonderful book.

And now,—did you ever think of it?—the Sunday school is a key school. Some people read their Bibles all their lives, and yet do not learn where to find the keys of which I have been speaking. When they are in difficulty, they turn to the Bible and read verses haphazard; and the key they find is very often the wrong one and does not fit the door at all, no matter how much they turn it and twist it.

What you are doing in the key school is to

grow so familiar with the whole Bible that you can at once turn to any part of it that will help you in the way you need help at the time, so that in your times of prosperity you will not get the sorrow key, and in your times of sorrow you will not get the bad-temper key, or make any such silly mistake.

Now, do you not think the key school one well worth attending and helping on in every way you can?

THE GREAT STONE WALL

A Lesson on Conquering Difficulties

BRING to the meeting a number of blocks of stone, such as can be built up into a wall. If stones cannot easily be obtained, take bricks, and make the necessary changes in your talk. Then get the children to talking about the expedition of the twelve spies from the camp of Moses to view the lands of Canaan, and of the difficulties that the ten spies at once discovered. As each difficulty is brought out,—each barrier that lay in the way of the conquest of the promised land,—lay down one stone in building up the wall.

For example, they saw that the men of that country were giants, or at least they fancied they were; this is one stone. Not only were these men bigger, but they were stronger than they; another stone. They dwelt in walled cities, hard to seize;

another stone. Their country was wild, and did not furnish sufficient food to live on; still another stone. More than that, in comparison with the people of Canaan, the Hebrews themselves were weak, they lived in tents, they were untrained in arms; for each of these, and similar worries that doubtless filled the minds of the ten spies, set up a stone in the wall. Call this the Wall of Difficulty that separated the Hebrews from the Holy Land.

Now, on the other side of this Wall of Difficulty fasten bunches of grapes as large as you can find, each bunch standing for the promise of this same country made at different times to the Hebrews. Bring these out by questioning the children. God had promised this very land to Abraham; fasten up one bunch of grapes. He had promised it also to Isaac; another bunch. To Jacob; to Moses.

After the grapes have been put in place, get the children to tell how Caleb and Joshua were the only ones of the spies that were brave enough to get on the other side of the Wall of Difficulty. They saw the big bunches of grapes, and all that they stood for. They saw the pleasures and riches of the promised land, as well as the dangers that hemmed in the pleasures and riches. Best of all, they saw God's promises. They carried back one of these great bunches of grapes in token of all these things. With this, separate one bunch, and take it to the other side of the wall.

But the ten spies saw nothing but the barren side of the great wall, and so it was that Caleb and Joshua were the only ones of the spies that ever came to live on the other side of the Wall of Difficulty, in the rich and happy promised land.

TOMMY, THE CONQUEROR

A Sermon-Story on Self-Restraint

Tommy was all the time saying that when he grew up he wanted to be a great soldier. He meant to conquer men, and whole armies.

"But," answered his mother, "isn't there some conquest that you can make before you grow up?"

"Why, how can that be?" said Tommy; "I surely am not to fight the other boys, am I?"

"No, indeed," said his mother; "but did you ever know that no one can conquer others until he has first conquered himself?"

"Why," said Tommy, "surely I do not need to conquer myself. I can make myself mind,—see," and with that he doubled up his fists, and stretched out his feet, and showed his mother how he could turn his body in any way he wished.

"Ah," said his mother, "you promised me this morning that you would weed the front walk. I wonder what would happen if you should command your body to do that! Would it obey you?"

Tommy saw the point, and went out without a word to weed the walk. It was hard work, and he found it difficult indeed to make his hands obey his will, especially when the boys came by and wanted him to go swimming with them. He went to ask his mother.

"Where are the boys going?" she inquired. And then, when Tommy answered, "To Reed's Pool," she said, "You know your father thinks that that is a dangerous place, and I cannot let you go. But what is this, Tommy?" for his mother saw his lips beginning to quiver and the tears beginning to come; "I thought you said this morning that you did not need to conquer yourself, and now I see that you cannot even command your feelings." At this Tommy went out with a smile on his face, and told the boys he could not go with them.

Later in the same day his neighbor Paul came to play croquet, but before they had played two games his mother heard angry words, and, looking out, saw the two boys almost come to blows. Paul went away sulkily as she approached, and Tommy explained that he had not been playing fairly. "Ah, but, my son," said his mother, "you also got angry; and isn't it necessary for one who expects to command others to be able to command his temper?"

And so it went on all day. Tommy found that it was hard work to command his feet to go on an errand. He found himself unable to keep his

hands from meddling with his father's new chess men. He found it quite impossible to restrain his tongue from answering back when an impudent boy made fun of him down street. And by the time night had come, talking it all over with his mother, he owned up that it was harder to command himself than he thought.

"But I am not going to give up," he said. "I'll get the better of myself yet."

"With Christ's help," answered his mother, as she kissed him good-night.

HENRY'S JOURNEY

Four Helps for Our Lives

ONCE upon a time there was a lad named Henry, who set out upon a very difficult journey. As he started on his way, there came to him a wise old man, who gave him four presents, telling him how to use them if any trials came to him in the course of his journeyings. As Henry went on, he came one day to a very dark place in some very dark woods. It grew so black about him that he could not see to place one foot before the other. While he was in great perplexity, of a sudden he remembered one of the old man's gifts, given him for just such a time. It was a box which he was to open when he wanted light in any dark place. He opened the box, and took out, as he expected, a lantern, but, as he had not

expected, it was already full of light, and cast about it such wonderful rays that he seemed to hold a real sun in his hands, and everything about him was as bright as day, so that he went on without any trouble at all.

On the following day he came, in his journey, to a very deep pit. His road stopped short at one side of it, but began again on the other side, and on the left and the right rose up precipitous cliffs, so that he could not tell what to do. And then it was that Henry remembered the second gift of the wise old man. It was simply a ring which he had placed upon his finger, telling him when he came to any such place to lift his hand upward, with this ring upon it. As soon as Henry did this a great hand came down from the sky, seized hold of his hand, and carried him safely over the pit.

Upon the following day Henry met in his way an immense tree, which had fallen straight across the road. On either side was a precipice, so that he could not go around the tree, nor was it possible to climb over it, though he tried. Of a sudden he bethought himself of the third gift of the wise old man, which was a crowbar, so heavy that he had often been on the point of throwing it away. But this he took and pressed under the tree, and found that, immense as it was, he could roll it easily out of his way.

On the fourth and last day of his journey Henry came across no such difficulties as the pre-

ceding, but one that, though at first sight it may seem easy to overcome, was really harder than all the rest put together. He had to go through a desert where the road was very hot, with no shade. Moreover, it was covered with sharp pebbles, and thorns sprang up everywhere, cutting his feet. And here he found good use for the last gift of his kind friend, a pair of sandals, which, as soon as he had placed them upon his feet, took away all their soreness, and made the road seem smooth and cool and pleasant, so that he sped quickly on his way, and soon came to his journey's end.

I have told you this story, children, because Henry's journey is exactly like the journey that each one of us must take through life, and God has given to each one of us these same four gifts, only we call them by very different names, and they do not take quite the shape that they took for Henry. The lantern is the Bible. Have you never heard it called a lamp for the feet, a light for the path? Whenever we come to any difficulties or dark problems, the Bible, if we read it carefully, will throw light upon all our troubles. The hand which Henry raised when he came to the deep pit was simply the hand of prayer, and whenever we get to any deep difficulties, if we will raise our hands in prayer to God, he will take hold of them and carry us safely to the other side. The crowbar was the crowbar of hard work, and if we press this firmly under the ob-

stacles in our way, and pull on it with all our might, never fear but they will roll out of our path. Finally, the shoes were the sandals of patience, that can make the hardest way seem pleasant and short. These four gifts God will give us for the asking. Have you ever earnestly asked him for them?

CHRIST'S NAMES

A Blackboard Bible-Study

THE different titles given to Christ in the Bible may well be classified under three heads,—his Shepherd names, his King names, and his Father names. The first class may well be symbolized by a shepherd's crook drawn upon the board; the second class, by a crown; and the third, by a heart. The first names may be written alongside the crook at right angles to it; the second, radiating from the projections of the crown; and the third, inside the heart.

As an illustration of the shepherd names,—those which have to do with Christ's loving care of his children,—take Advocate, Job 2: 1; Deliverer, Acts 7: 35; High Priest, Heb. 5: 1; the true Light, John 1: 8, 9; Mediator, 1 Tim. 2: 5; good Shepherd, John 10: 11; great Shepherd of the sheep, Heb. 13: 20.

As examples of the King names, take Alpha and Omega, Rev. 1: 8; Corner Stone, 1 Pet. 2:

5; Governor, Matt. 2: 6; Holy One, Luke 4: 34; King everlasting, Luke 1: 33; King of Israel, John 1: 49; King of the Jews, Matt. 2: 4; King of kings, Rev. 17: 14; Lion of the tribe of Judah, Rev. 5: 5; Lord, Matt. 3: 3; Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2: 8; Lord of lords, Rev. 11: 14; Prince, Acts 5: 3; Prince of life, Acts 3: 15; Prince of peace, Isa. 9: 6; Root of David, Rev. 5: 5; Ruler, Micah 5: 2; Son of David, Matt, 9: 27.

And finally, as examples of the Father names, —those that refer to the Father-love of God,— take Dayspring, Luke 1: 78; Immanuel, Matt. 1: 23; Lamb of God, John 1: 29; our Righteousness, Jer. 33: 16; Redeemer, Isa. 50: 9, 20; Saviour, Luke 2: 11; Son of the Highest, Luke 1: 32; Son of God, Matt. 3: 17; only begotten Son, John 1: 14; Son of man, Matt. 8: 20; Word, John 1: 1; Word of God, Rev. 19: 13.

WHAT MISSIONS DO

An Object Lesson

BRING to the meeting seven articles, as illustrations of the seven fundamental works of modern missions. As each article is brought before the children, talk about the particular branch of mission work that it represents. Get the children to pray about it. Intersperse Bible verses and songs. Many appropriate songs and verses can be found.

The following are the seven objects that may be used: In the first place, modern missionaries have been among the most effective explorers of unknown portions of the land's surface. A compass or an ax will make an appropriate object to indicate this work of exploration. Livingstone is the most conspicuous example of this sort of missionary.

After the country is made known to Christians, the next work of the missionary is to civilize the natives. A toy house, which may be made out of pasteboard if you have no toy house at hand, will represent to the children this branch of missionary activity. Tell them how wretchedly the savages live, destitute of even the common conveniences of life, and how much the missionaries must teach them about cleanliness, clothing, shelter, and food.

Civilization brings commerce in its train, and the opening up of trade with lands that have first been opened up by the missionaries, has proved enormously profitable to Christian countries. A toy ship will stand to the children for this result of missionary work.

Turning to what the missionaries do directly, let a medicine bottle stand for the work of medical missions. Remind the children that these heathen practise witchcraft and superstitious rites instead of the wise methods of our physicians. If you have read the biography of such a missionary as James Gilmour, pioneer missionary to the

Mongolians, you will have an abundance of facts for this part of your talk.

The missionary cannot go far without opening up schools and educating the people. Bring a spelling-book to stand for the school-house, and tell the children how not only common schools, but academies and colleges, for girls as well as boys, have followed in the wake of all missionary enterprise.

But of course the main work of the missionary is none of these things. It is to open up to the dark souls of the heathen the wonderful story of Jesus, that their souls may be cleansed from all the defilement and wretchedness of their sins. A cross, or, better, a copy of the Bible, will stand for this, the chief work of the missionaries.

And now, to sum up the whole, set before the children a lighted candle, symbolizing all of these different results of missionary work, the bringing in of the light of civilization and commerce, of education and health, and especially the Light of the world. Before you close the exercise, be sure to review by holding up each symbol, and asking the children to tell what it represents.

THE MAN THAT WOULD NOT BE BOUND

A Talk on the Pledge

[While this talk is intended primarily for Junior Endeavor societies and others that have a pledge, it may be made a general talk on promises.]

Once there were four travellers who set out to journey together. They had not gone far before they came to a very dark woods. It grew blacker and blacker, till they could not see one another and could just barely keep the path. One of the travellers proposed that they tie themselves together for fear one of them might get lost, and this was done. There was one of the company, however, who made fun of this. He did not wish to be bound, he said. He wanted to feel himself free to walk as he pleased. So he would have nothing to do with the rope; and it was not long, as they trudged on through the blackness, before he was missing. They shouted and hunted and did their best to find him, but he was never seen again, and undoubtedly he perished miserably by himself in the forest.

The three who were left went on till they came to a great ice field which they had to cross, and again one of them proposed that they bind themselves together for fear of falling through the ice and snow. Two of them agreed, but the third ridiculed the idea. He did not intend to be bound

by any rope out in broad daylight. He wanted to be free to walk where he pleased. It was not long before this foolish man slipped into a great chasm that was hidden by the snow, and there he died. Though the other two often slipped in the same way, yet the rope kept them from going down entirely.

They went on a little further, and came to a lake they had to cross. As they were sailing over, there came up a great storm, and the captain of the boat wanted to lash them to the mast to keep them from being washed overboard. One of them willingly submitted, but the other made fun of the proposal. As if he could not hold on to the mast without being tied to it! Soon, however, there came a monster wave which washed him overboard, and that was the last of him. And so it happened that only one of the travellers ever reached his journey's end. And this was because the others were so silly as to refuse to be bound, preferring to trust to their own unaided strength.

Now our pledge, children, is a strong rope tying us to our duties, and keeping us from straying away from them into carelessness and foolish ways. Some people think they do not need this rope of a promise, but can hold to their duties without it; but they will meet the fate of the three silly travellers I have told you about. The only sensible way is to use the rope whenever the rope will help us. And that is why we believe in the Christian Endeavor pledge.

THE THREE OFFICE-BOYS

A Talk on Good Manners and How They Help Toward Success

ONCE a new office-boy was needed in a certain office, and Tom was hired. Tom was well able to do the work, was quick and energetic, but he lost his place in a week, just because he had no manners.

When he brought the letters to his employer's desk he slammed them down anywhere, and went off whistling. He whistled all the time, without thinking that it interfered with his master's work. He kept drumming with his heels on the floor while waiting for orders. He never shut the door after him. He often wore his hat into the room. His clothes were not kept clean. He was playing when he should have been at work. You see at once that Tom was too careless and thoughtless to have good manners or keep a good place.

Next they tried Fred. Now Fred knew that Tom had been dismissed because of his lack of manners, and so he made up his mind that that fault should not be found with him. He wore his best clothes when he should have worn his business suit, but his best clothes, alas! did not conceal the fact that his hands were very dirty. He gave his employer the letters with a low bow, but, alas! he often forgot to bring them at all.

He stood, hat in hand, a pattern of politeness, while his master was giving him orders, but he did not carry out those orders faithfully. In short, he was all the time thinking so much about himself and how he was appearing that he did not half do his work, and so he did not appear well at all, and he, too, was dismissed.

The third boy, Edward, stayed because he had truly good manners. The secret of his good manners was his sincere desire to help and please his employer, and his forgetfulness of himself. He put his whole mind on what he was doing, and so he was always attentive and ready and cheery and prompt. He not only kept his place, but he got promoted time and again, until now he is a member of the firm.

The thing I want you to learn from this story, boys and girls, is that the best rule for good manners is the Golden Rule. If you are all the time trying to serve others, quite forgetting yourselves, you need never be afraid of your manners, for they will be absolutely perfect.

THE BALLOON

An Object Lesson on Happiness

Did you ever hear, children, of the great balloon called Happiness, that God sends us to lift us up over all our sorrows and difficulties and

fears? It is not like this balloon I hold in my hand, for you can see this and you cannot see that; but we will let this one stand for it.

Once there was a man who thought he was having a very hard time in the world. He was poor, he thought, though he really was comfortably off. He feared dreadful things for the future, though no dreadful things had ever yet come to him. He distrusted his friends, and imagined himself surrounded by foes. His whole life, indeed, was as if it was hemmed in by great rocks and briers and other harsh things that he could not get over.

And so God sent him this great happiness balloon. Indeed, he offers it to every one of us in this blessed Bible. And what did this foolish man do? Just what I am doing now. He took one great worry, which was heavy as a stone, and tied it to the balloon, as I am tying this stone. He then took another worry, and another, and another, and another. Then he got into the car of the balloon, and expected it to fly away. Of course it did not stir. How could it, tied down to the very worries from which God had sent the balloon to carry him?

O, my children, let us trust God. He will take care of us. Let us stop worrying. Let us get into the balloon of happiness that he sets down beside each one of us. Let us cut the cords that have tied any foolish worries to it, just as I am now cutting these strings, and we shall fly away

up over all our doubts and fears and troubles, just as you see our balloon flying toward the sky.

THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR WHEEL

A Blackboard Talk for the Junior Society

Draw on the board or on a large sheet of paper a great wheel. It will be much better if this can be drawn in the presence of the children. Tell them that this wheel stands for the Junior society and its work. Then put in the spokes. Each one of them must stand for a committee. You may use different colors for each spoke, as yellow for the sunshine committee, sky blue for the prayer-meeting committee, pure white for the lookout committee, warm red for the social committee, green for the flower committee, etc.

Talk a little about the tire that binds all of these spokes together. What is it? The pledge, of course!

Then talk about the hub which is the centre of it all. What is the hub? The Bible, of course!

Make the children notice that all of the spokes are of the same length. All of the committees are important. If any one of them should do poor work, the wheel would be unsound and likely to fall to pieces.

Name different parts of the tire. Here is the promise to take some part in every meeting. Here is the promise of daily prayer, and here the

pledge of daily Bible-reading. Does it make any difference where a break comes? No, the tire must all be good and strong. A weak spot anywhere means a collapse just as a weak spot in the committee work means a collapse.

Then ask the different members of the committees to tell, each one of them, of some one thing his committee should do for the dear Lord's sake. As each thing is mentioned, write it upon the board alongside or across the proper spoke, or else in lines radiating from the spokes. Use appropriate colors for these also. You will find this exercise a very valuable one, tending to fix in the minds of the whole society the kinds of work they have undertaken to do.

SOME FAMOUS JOURNEYS

A Bible-Study Illustrated by Objects

PREPARE seven symbols of seven important Bible journeys, those that teach lessons you wish to impress upon your children. You may not prefer the seven that I have chosen, but I give these as samples. Upon the upper part of your blackboard, or, if you have no blackboard, upon any strip of wood that you can suspend in your meeting-room, place seven hooks or nails from which your symbols may hang, and write under each, or place in connection with each, a placard containing a single word in plain letters, which will be the key-word of the journey.

For example, a large bean-pod—for that is what the husks really were—may stand for the sad journey of the prodigal son, the word over it being "love," and the central teaching being love to parents and to God. A sickle will stand for the story of Ruth and Naomi, "unselfishness" being the key-word. The picture of a great fish, best a shark, will remind the children of Jonah's self-willed journey, "obedience" being the key-word.

A stairway you may make from pasteboard, or a picture of the famous scene, will stand for Jacob's journey to his uncle, and this journey is to teach the lesson of "trust." The picture of a river and the word, "faith," will summarize the journey of Naaman the leper. A gilded box, as symbolizing her presents, with the word, "wisdom," which she was seeking, represents the journey of the queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. Finally, a bit of rough rock, with the word, "bravery," will be a sufficient hint of Elijah's journey through the wilderness, when his heart sank within him after his magnificent victory on Mount Carmel, and when he hid in the hollow of a rock and saw God pass before him.

By questions, get from the children the story of each journey, and at the end review in several different ways, asking such questions as, "What journey does the sickle stand for? the altar? the rock?" "What does the husk journey teach? the fish journey? the box journey?" "What

journey teaches courage? what obedience? what faith?"

THE PRINCE IN THE HOVEL

A Sermon-Story on Heaven

ONCE there was a little boy who lived in a wretched hut, with his little sister and a very old man, far off in the forest. Though the little boy did not know it, he was a prince, the heir to a great kingdom. Sad to say, he was also a hunchback, and spent a great deal of time in bitter pain. One day he was complaining about the wretched poverty in which they lived, the hut that let in the rain and the snow and the cold winds, and their scanty food and miserable clothing, when the old man, who was very kind and wise, sat down and told him all about the good fortune that was ahead of him; that he was the son of a king; that a beautiful palace awaited him; that he was to be very rich and to wear most magnificent garments, and to have the finest things to eat, and the most beautiful objects to look upon.

The young boy was very happy at this, as you may imagine, and his happiness lasted all that day. But the next day his back pained him greatly, and he was as miserable as if he had never heard of the wonderful palace and kingdom that were to be his. So the old man sat down once again by his side and told him something more about the palace. "As soon as you enter

its great door," he said, " you will find your poor hunchback body changed, in the twinkling of an eye, into a body that will be straight and strong and beautiful, and in this palace to which you are going there is never any pain." At this you may readily believe the boy was delighted, and could not contain himself with longing for the good time to come.

That very night, however, as soon as darkness came on, everything was forgotten, for the small boy, prince though he was, greatly dreaded the dark. This was an especially black night, with a heavy thunder-storm, and the prince was filled with terror. Upon this the wise old man told him something more about the beautiful palace that was to be his; namely, that in the palace and in all the kingdom that were to be his own there was to be no night, and he asked the prince if he could not with courage endure the few nights that were to come before he entered the land of sunshine.

But a great sorrow was before this young boy. It came not many days later in the sudden death of his little sister whom he greatly loved, and as he was grieving at this as if his heart would break, the wise old man told him the most wonderful thing of all about his palace and kingdom, and that was that in them he would see his sister again, more happy and strong and beautiful than she ever was, and into that country there never came so ugly a thing as death.

And so it was that for every sorrow and trouble the prince met in his life in the hovel in the forest, the old man could tell him something beautiful and comforting about the palace and kingdom that were to be his.

And now, do you know, boys and girls, each one of you is this prince, and all of these things that I have told you about are true of you. You have, or will have, all kinds of trouble in this world,—sickness of body and anxiety of spirit, poverty, it may be, and death; but in the palace of the king to which you are going,—as Christ himself, who came from there, has told us,—there is to be no night, and no sorrow, and no weeping, and no death. Everything there is rich and splendid, beautiful and happy. Can you not stand a few short years, even in a hovel, with such a splendid prospect before you?

CLEAN HANDS AND HEARTS

An Illustration of Sin and Salvation

Did you ever see some one whose hands were moderately clean, at least not noticeably dirty, and then place his hand alongside a hand that is as clean as soap and water can make it? How black and filthy seemed the first hand in comparison, although it appeared white enough until the hand that was really white was placed alongside it. And so it is, children, with the cleanest life

in the world. It is not really clean, and will not seem so when placed alongside the only life ever lived that had upon it no stain of sin, the life of Jesus.

But do you know that if you should put under a microscope the cleanest and the whitest hand you ever saw, the microscope would show that it is very far indeed from clean? The air is filled with little bits of life called microbes, and these settle upon everything. Some of them are harmless, but others are very hurtful indeed, and cause all kinds of diseases when they get into places where they can grow and multiply. It is not pleasant to think about it and yet it is true that immense numbers of these little living particles, as the microscope will show us, are upon the cleanest hand. We cannot wash them off, and the only way to destroy them is to put the hand into certain acids diluted. The hand that is taken out of such a bath, that will kill the microbes but not hurt the hand, may be called absolutely clean, and no other hand is really clean.

And so it is, children, that even the most beautiful human life, that seems perfectly fair and white as men look upon it, must be sinful when seen by the eye of God. You have heard, I am sure, of the only washing that can make lives absolutely clean; that is, the washing which we talk about when we speak of Christ's blood washing away our sin. This is a picture way of talking, but means that all our lives ought to be sur-

rounded and filled with the things which Christ's blood, shed upon the cruel cross, stands for. That is, we should be filled with his love and his self-sacrifice, with his meekness and his bravery, indeed, with his entire spirit; and if all our life is plunged in this, then the ugly, cruel, mischievous things that we call hatred and impurity and malice, indecent words and vile thoughts, and temptations of all kinds, yes, and tobacco and rum and swearing and everything of the sort, would be washed entirely from our lives. And this cleansing, boys and girls, every one can have for the asking.

THE SILLY PAINTS

A Story to Teach Submission to God's Will

THERE was once a great artist who suddenly found one day that the brushes with which he was working, and the paints he was applying to his canvas, were in rebellion against him. It was as if they all wanted to be independent; and indeed, the night before, the paint tubes and the brushes, the palette and the knife, and all his other tools, had formed a conspiracy against him. They had decided that they could plan their own matters much better without his help.

And so, when he wanted to put a bit of scarlet in one part of the picture, the brush darted off to another part. The colors he was laying on ap-

peared in places where he did not wish them at all. The white would not combine with the blue when he tried to mix the paint for the sky, nor the blue with the yellow when he tried to make the green for grass. His knife scratched off the wrong portions when he tried to make erasures, and his pink got dirty.

He worked faithfully, thinking the trouble was all in himself, and wondering what was the matter, until at last he saw that his picture was spoiled. In despair and disgust he threw his canvas away, and threw his paints and his brushes after it, so that all that the foolish tools gained was their own ruin.

You may think, children, that this is a very strange story, and yet it shows very clearly what most of us are doing all the time. God is the great artist who ought to fashion all our lives. The paints and the tools he uses are our minutes and days and years, the powers he has given us, our money, our time, our clothes, our faces and tongues and hands, and everything we have, and everything we are.

If we let him have his way with us, he will make a beautiful picture out of our lives; but if we rebel and try to plan our own living, after the manner of the foolish paints and tools of which I have been telling, then all our life becomes nothing but an ugly daub.

And that, boys and girls, is what is meant by the word consecration; for consecration is sim-

ply letting God do with us what he wishes. Can we not trust ourselves completely to his wise and loving hands?

A QUEER CLIMATE

A Talk on Temper

SOMEWHERE there is a very remarkable country, in which they have a very strange climate. The weather in this queer land does not depend on sun or rain, on clouds or sky. It depends entirely on the people themselves. If the people are cross, a thunder storm comes up, and the lightnings flash, and everything gets dark and terrible. If the people are sad, it is sure to rain. If the people are surly, a sharp frost covers the ground. If the people are gloomy, the sun hides its face behind thick clouds. If the people are cheery, the sun comes out again, and everything is bright.

In this strange country one person is often responsible for the weather of the whole town. The crossness of one man will make a start like a little cloud in one corner of the sky, and it will grow from man to man, just as the cloud grows, until after a while the whole sky will be very cloudy. And so the people in that land have had to try to keep each other good for the purpose of getting good weather, if for no other.

And, after all, children, I am not sure that this queer land is so very different from the place where you and I live. The way people feel and

the way they act do not, to be sure, make real rain and real thunder and bring on genuine clouds in this world of ours; but they make a kind of storm that is a good deal worse. Bad feelings in the heart cause a coldness that is worse than any frost of spring or fall, a lightning flash that does more damage than any that ever came from the thunder cloud, and torrents of tears far more hurtful than any rainfall.

Christ came to show us how to keep our soul weather sunny all the time, how to drive away bad temper and the blues, how to sweep the clouds away from our spirits and the darkness from our lives. If we have Christ living in our hearts, if we all belong to his sunshine committees, then, no matter what the weather is in the sky and on the earth, it will be fair weather in our lives.

ROBERT ON GUARD

A Story to Teach Watchfulness Against Sin

[You may draw beforehand, on the blackboard, pictures of hands in the positions described, or they may be cut from illustrated papers and pinned on. In either case cover them, and disclose them one by one.]

God said to Robert, "To-day you must watch over your life, the life-house in which you dwell." Let this square that I draw on the blackboard stand for Robert's life, and this straight mark in front of it stand for Robert himself, as he takes

up his position, erect, firm, and confident, to keep watch over himself during the day.

The first enemy that came up as Robert stood on guard over himself was Master Pride. I will draw a long, straight mark to represent him. Master Pride was so tall and held his head so high that Robert had to look far up at him, and while Robert was holding his head so high, as Master Pride caused him to, a little demon crawled into his life, one that he could not see because he crept along at his feet.

The next enemy that came up was Master Anger, a sharp fellow, whom I will represent by this angular line. Master Anger ran straight at Robert, his sharp angle striking him hard, and the first thing Robert knew he was fighting, and while he was fighting another little demon crept into his life-house.

The third enemy was Master Selfishness, who came as soon as Master Anger got out of the way. I will represent him by this capital "I." And Master Selfishness held Robert firmly while another little demon entered, and these three demons that were now in pitched out of the window of Robert's house all the good thoughts and good feelings that were in there before, and Robert was so busy with Master Selfishness that he did not see it.

Master Covetous came next. I represent him by this slanting line, because Master Covetous is always leaning forward, trying to reach some-

thing that he does not have. Master Covetous got Robert to running with him after a fine toy that a boy was carrying by, and while Robert was away a fourth demon crept into his life-house.

Then came Master Greedy. This big circle will stand for him. He held out apples and candy and nuts, and enticed Robert away so that another demon crept in.

Master Impatience was the next, and this crooked line, dashed off hastily, will stand for him. He bade Robert not waste his time standing guard in such a stupid way, but lock up the door of his house and go off and leave it. So Robert obeyed, and locked in all the demons that were there.

The seventh foe was Master Lazy,—this horizontal line,—and he called Robert to come and lie down with him and go to sleep in the pleasant shade of a tree, and while Robert was asleep, still more demons got in at the window of his house. Now when Robert wakes up, he will find his house full of demons,—so full that he cannot get in himself.

AS GOD SEES OUR HANDS

A Blackboard Talk on Prayer

How do we hold our hands, children, when we pray? All of us alike, probably, folded together, and sometimes held up toward heaven. But though our hands seem all alike as we take this

position, yet I often think that God sees them in a very different way.

I have heard prayers that seem to be aimed at the people who are listening, and not raised to God at all. I think God saw those prayers as if the fingers of each hand of the man who was praying were pointed straight at some brother or sister, as if to shame him.

There are other prayers that are nothing but begging prayers. They do not praise God for anything, and they have nothing of adoration in them. They are one long petition. In such a case, I think God sees the hands, that seem to us to be folded, as if they were not folded at all, but grasping out as if to seize as much as they can get hold of.

Some prayers I have heard seem to have nothing to do with the life, but are cold and meaningless. The person is asking for things he does not really want, and is going through the form of thanksgiving without really feeling grateful. I almost fancy, when I hear such prayers, that the folded hands are cut off from the body and floating off in the air, with no more connection with the real body than the prayer has with the real life.

Other prayers are self-conscious, and the man who prays seems rather to be praising himself than praising God. It is as if his folded hands were not folded at all, but reached up as if to pat himself on the head.

Other prayers are timid, the one who prays not having faith that God is eager to give him all the good things he can possibly ask for, and more too; and these folded hands seem to me to be reached up toward heaven, and then half drawn down again, as if in doubt and insincerity.

It makes no difference, boys and girls, how you fold your hands when you pray, or, for that matter, whether you fold them at all; but, when you pray, be sure you do not make the mistakes that I have been talking about. Be sure you do not pray *at* others, as if you pointed your fingers at them. Be sure you do not pray prayers that do nothing but beg. Be sure your prayers have some connection with your real life, that they do not praise yourself, and that they are not boasting prayers; but pray trustfully and eagerly, and modestly and unselfishly. All such prayers are sure to be answered.

SORRY FOR THE WRONG THINGS

A Lesson on Anxiety and What Is Worth It

Once there was a crooked young apple tree whom the gardener overheard scolding away to himself. The sky was very cloudy, said the crooked apple-tree, and he wondered why the sun did not shine. The birds kept chattering in his branches so that he could not think, and the gardener had left a heap of rubbish at his foot. He

wished it might be cleared away. When the gardener heard this, he spoke sharply to the crooked tree. "You are worrying about the wrong things," said he. "What you ought to worry about is that crook in your trunk. Why don't you straighten yourself? The clouds, and the birds, and the rubbish heap will all soon be gone, but that crook in your trunk will be there forever if you do not straighten it out while you are young."

There was a muddy brook tumbling down to the sea, and as it hurried along it kept growling about the ugly weeds on the bank, about the hot sun that made its head ache, about the sharp rocks that hurt its feet. Indeed, the muddy brook was all stirred up. But a kind tree bent over it and gave it a bit of advice: "You are worrying about the wrong things," said the tree. "What you need to worry about is this mud that makes you ugly,—yes, far uglier than the weeds on the bank,—and unfits you for any good use. You will soon pass by the weeds, and the sharp rocks, and all the rest; but unless you get rid of the mud, men will despise you."

There was once a larva that had in him the making of a beautiful butterfly, but this larva did nothing but grumble. The leaves he had to eat were not tender enough, their taste was stale, and the tree he was feeding upon did not give him enough shade. While he was grumbling away to himself, his comrade, who was feeding near by, said: "Brother, you are worrying over the wrong

things. I see that an ichneumon fly has laid his egg on your back. Unless you rub it off at once, the egg will hatch into a worm that will feed upon you and kill you."

There was once a boy, who got terribly cross one day about the rain-storm that came up just as he was about to go on a picnic. He got sulky the next day because he could not have a new bicycle. He would not work at school the third day because another boy got ahead of him in his studies. And after this went on for many days, his father gave him a long and earnest talk. "The trouble with you, my boy," he said, "is that you worry about the wrong things, about rain on holidays, and because you cannot have your own way, and because you cannot get ahead of the other boys. The real things to be sorry for are your crossness and your sulkiness and your stupidity. These are the only things that hurt you."

Christ was sad over the sad things, and sorry for the things for which he should have been sorry. He did not mourn because he was poor, and because he was scorned by men, and because they sought to kill him, but he grieved because of their sins. Is not this a lesson for all of us?

PETER HEADSTRONG'S HOUSE

A Study of St. Peter's Life

[The reference to Peter may be omitted, at the close, and this may be made a general talk on the necessity of a solid foundation for one's life.]

PETER HEADSTRONG was a very rich man who had a beautiful palace to build. His architect drew all the plans and selected the location for the palace. It was a spot where the soil was not very deep, but underneath it was a solid rock that reached down to the centre of the earth.

As soon as the architect was out of the way, Peter Headstrong decided that there was a place he liked better. It was a place where the soil was deep, and where the grass was green, and where there were many trees, and so he had workmen build the palace in this place. But, as it happened, there was no rock there, and the soil was sandy and treacherous.

Peter Headstrong hurried on the workmen, and it was not many months before the roof was finished, the work done, and everything about the house in beautiful order. But alas! when the architect came to look at the completed house, he saw that the walls were cracking, the doors were twisted, the foundations crumbling, and he told Peter Headstrong that he must at once move everything of value out of the house, for it would soon tumble down.

Peter Headstrong refused to believe him, but the architect was a true prophet, and, just when he said it would, the palace fell to pieces. And so Peter Headstrong was compelled to move all the material, and set it up again on the rocky ground which the architect had first selected. And here the beautiful palace was finally built, so strongly that he lived in it all his life.

This story, boys and girls, will show you the kind of life that was lived by Peter—Simon Peter, I mean now,—that very headstrong disciple of our Lord. He made all his mistakes because he was trying to build his house on sandy, unstable ground. Christ told him that the house would fall down, and you know how sadly it did fall just at the time Christ said it would, when Peter three times denied his Saviour. But afterward Peter took his ruined life, and set it up again as Christ bade him, on the solid Rock. Let this lesson, children, teach every one of you to build your lives on the Foundation that Peter at last found.

WHAT BECAME OF THE RIVER

A Talk About the Church's Need of the Children

ONCE there was a noble river, sweeping downward to the sea. It turned many useful mills, it supplied with drinking water many towns, it nourished the roots of many trees, it charmed many eyes with its beauty. But at last this noble

river grew very conceited. It thought that it alone was doing all this, and quite forgot the thousands of little springs hidden away up among the mountains.

One day the river heard some one talking about these same springs, and saying that the river, great as it was, would last only a short time without them. "We'll see!" exclaimed the river, angrily. So it sent word to all the smaller rivers that flowed into it, and bade them send word up along the water courses and into the mountains telling these mountain springs to flow some other way, for the great river had no need of them. And this message was quickly delivered.

Well, you do not need to be told, children, what speedily happened. The little springs turned off other ways and did not flow into the mountain torrents, and soon these torrents dried up. Then the small rivers, which were fed by the mountain torrents and by these alone, they, too, began to shrink, and at last dried up altogether.

"What is the matter?" cried the great river, in alarm; but the empty beds of the small rivers that had poured into it could give no answer. And so the great river itself gradually grew less, as the hot sun evaporated its waters, and as its currents ran down to the sea, with no fresh water coming in from the mountains to take their place. It tried to shout to the mountain springs, but they could not hear, they were so far away. "Help! Help!" it cried, but cried in vain, and soon every

drop of the great river had run into the sea, and the river, that thought it had no need of the little springs, was at an end.

Boys, girls, this great river is the church, and the children are the little mountain springs. Have you ever thought what would happen to the church if the children did not love it and help it and grow up into it? Who would take the places of the older people, and carry on their work, when they fell into the great sea of death? Ah, *our* church, though, is not like the great river in one way. It knows how much it needs the children, and it wants them, and urges them to come and help swell its great current. You will not refuse, will you?

THE BRIDGE

A Talk about Talk

[If you have an artist friend, get him to draw a picture of this scene, to illustrate your talk.]

ONCE there were two cities that were separated from each other by a very deep ravine, filled at the bottom with a very dangerous river. There was a beautiful bridge over the ravine, and this was the only possible way of carrying anything between the two cities. As you may imagine, this bridge was thronged all the time with horses and carts, carrying from one city to the other all kinds of goods.

After a while, however, a terrible pestilence

broke out in one city, and in the other city there was a succession of daring robberies. It was not long before the pestilence appeared also in the healthy city, and the robberies broke out in the city that had been at peace.

The people of both cities were frightened. Said one, "The pestilence is bad enough, without these robbers." Said the other, "The robbers are bad enough without this pestilence."

So the wise men of both cities met at the centre of the bridge, and this is what they said: "This bridge is the only way things can go from one city to the other, therefore it is this bridge we must watch. You at the pestilence end must see that everything and everybody is disinfected before coming over to us, and we at our end will see that none but honest persons go over to you."

This was done, and soon the troubles of the two cities were at an end, because each refrained from adding to the other's ill, and instead sent help to overcome it.

Now, children, think of our lives as cities that are separated the one from the other by deep gulfs, and there is no way of passing from life to life except by one bridge. Do you know what the bridge is? It is conversation.

Over that bridge how many bad things go! There is malice, and anger, and bitterness, and rudeness, and thoughtlessness, and all sorts of evil things, that are worse than robbers or a pestilence. And what noble and beautiful and help-

ful things Christ sent over this bridge! Oh, let us learn from him. Let us set a watch over our lips, which are the entrance to this unseen bridge, and let us permit to go out upon it nothing except what will cheer and comfort, strengthen and bless.

THE DREAMER AND THE DOER

An Object Lesson

ONCE, boys, and girls, there were two plants that looked like the two I have brought to show you. One of them, you see, is stunted, and withered, and half dead, and has no flowers. The other is fine and large, and see what beautiful blossoms it bears! Well, this is the story of these two plants.

The first of them, as soon as its head popped above the soil, began to think, "Now, I wonder what sort of blossom I shall bear? Shall I have a red rose, or a white lily, or a blue harebell, or a purple hyacinth, or a yellow tulip? Will people praise me, and shall I get into a rich vase in some rich house?"

Such thoughts the silly plant could not keep out of its head, and indeed it did not try. It paid no attention to the rain and sun and soil. It did not send out its little rootlets, as it should, to gather in the substances that would have made it strong and flourishing. It just dreamed, and dreamed, and dreamed. The result was that never a blossom came, and scarcely a leaf, and the plant itself

cannot live very much longer on its poor, dried-up roots.

But the beautiful plant! Why, it spent no thought on what might happen some day, but simply grew, the best it knew how. It opened up its leaves to the sun and rain. It sent its roots deep and wide through the rich, life-giving earth. And at last, one happy day, it discovered that it bore a most lovely flower. And soon came another, and then another, and another, until people came to look at it, and enjoy it, and admire it.

And now, children, which plant do you want to imitate,—the plant that kept thinking so much about what it would grow to be that it did not grow at all, or the plant that just did the best it knew how, and trusted God to send the beauty and the glory when the right time came?

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE OF PETER WILLING

A Sermon-Story on Helpfulness

Peter Willing was travelling along a hot and dusty road. It was uphill, too, and he was carrying a heavy burden. His feet were sore and his head ached, and altogether he was having a hard time of it.

He was wondering how he could ever get to his journey's end, when he came across a poor old man, who was sitting by the roadside. This

old man also had a burden to carry, and it was so very heavy that it had entirely worn him out.

"Now, what's to be done?" said Peter Willing. "I have all I can carry, to be sure; but it will never do to leave this poor old man in such a plight." So Peter Willing hoisted the old man's burden on his back beside his own, and bade him come along with him.

Then it was that a strange thing happened. Not only did the stranger's burden seem to add no weight, but the two together were not as heavy as the one before. Indeed, they both were as light as a feather.

While Peter was marvelling over this, a little further up the hill he fell in with an old woman. She was crawling on, gasping for breath, and just about to give up through weariness.

"Now, what *is* to be done?" cried Peter. "I certainly have my hands full, and yet it would be a shame to leave this poor creature to faint by the way." So Peter bent down and took the old woman by the arm to help her along the uphill road.

And then there happened another wonder, for the road, that had been so steep and hilly a moment before, now seemed to Peter Willing to have become perfectly level. Indeed, he even thought that it was slightly inclined downward, and he had hard work to persuade himself, by the position of the sun, that he was still in the right direction, and had not turned square around.

Well, so it went on. Peter stopped by the way to give to a third worn-out pilgrim, gasping by the hot roadside, a drink of a cooling liquid he carried, and as he went on, lo! the road no longer seemed hot to him, but cool and pleasant. At another time he stopped to bind up with soothing salve the foot of a little boy, who had cut it on a sharp piece of glass, and was crying bitterly; and, as Peter went on, his own feet, which had been sore and blistered, seemed as fresh and springy as when he had started. Some way he lost his own headache in binding up the aching temples of the poor old woman he was helping along. And, in short, Peter Willing came to his journey's end as fine and fresh as might be, just because he had stopped all along the way to help other people.

You do not believe this story, children? Well, you have chances every day to find out whether it is true or not.

THE STORY OF THE SIX GARDENS

A Talk about Getting Good from the Junior Society

[This may easily be changed to a Sunday-school talk.]

I WILL show you what your society ought to be doing for you, and why it may be that you do not get more good from the society than you do get, by telling you the story of six children, each of whom was given a little garden to take care of. One of them, Martin Mocker by name, made fun

of the whole plan. He scarcely went to the gardens at all; and when he went, it was merely to laugh at the rest, and to do no work. You do not wonder, do you, that nothing grew in his garden? This is the way some young people act about the Junior society. They ridicule it; and, if they attend the meetings, they attend only to make fun of them, and of course they get no good from them.

The second child was Carrie Careless. She planted seed in her garden, but then she went off and left it alone. The seeds sprang up; but so, too, did the weeds; and the weeds grew, as weeds have a habit of doing, much faster than the seed, and soon crowded it out altogether, so that she could get no good from her garden. Carrie Careless reminds me of the Juniors who take the pledge, join the society, and then pay no more attention to it, forgetting the pledge, neglecting the Bible-reading and prayer at home, and seldom even getting to the meetings. Do you wonder that no good things grow in their Junior gardens?

Sam Spasm was the third child. He planted his garden at the same time Carrie Careless planted hers. The seeds grew, and he kept the weeds down for a time, but he soon got tired of the game, and cared for the garden only by spurts. During one of his forgetful spells there came a long drought, which withered all his plants, so that he, too, got no good from his garden. I wonder if you have any Sam Spasms in your so-

ciety, who attend the meeting only by spurts, and keep the pledge only when they feel like it? Do you wonder that their Junior gardens bear no fruit?

The fourth child was Pearl Pride, and she made a terrible mistake at the very time when she planted her seed. She got in a lot of seeds of weeds with the seeds of the flowers she thought she was planting. She took care of them, and watered them, and hoed them, and was very proud of them until they blossomed; and then she saw to her shame that nearly all of them were weeds. The Pearl Prides in your Junior society are those who are thinking all the time how good they are and how smart they are, but who are trying to show off, and do not examine their hearts to see whether they are doing it all for the love of Christ. They will raise some flowers, but I am afraid most of their Junior gardens will be weeds.

Will Weary was the fifth. His seeds had scarcely got above the ground before he decided that weeding and hoeing were altogether too hard work, so he concluded to lie down under a tree and watch the rest work. I am afraid your society has a good many Will Wearys in it, but I hope not. They are the Juniors who make up their minds that to attend the society meetings every week is too hard work, that the committee work is tiresome, that it is too much to expect of any one to read the Bible and pray every day; and of course their gardens amount to nothing.

But the sixth child was Emma Earnest, and I think that most Juniors are like her. She worked hard and faithful. She planted just the right kind of seed. She watered it carefully, and weeded it with pains, and kept the earth loose around it, and free from harmful insects, and as a result she had a garden so beautiful, with its bright colors and its fragrance, that people came for miles around to see it, while she had hundreds of flowers to give away to brighten other homes. You do not need to be told who are the Emma Earnests of your society. They are those who keep the pledge in all points, are trying constantly to do what Christ would have them do, and they are the ones who are getting good constantly from their Junior society.

HOW TO GROW STRONG

An Object Lesson.

I HAVE brought you here, children, four things that will throw some light on our topic for to-day. The first is a little seed. Here it is. How is it ever going to grow to be a great, strong plant? Well, first it will reach up into the fresh, warm air two little leaflets. Then it will reach down into the warm, rich soil some tiny rootlets. It will lengthen these more and more, all the time groping around in the soil and air for water and plant food, and all of these things that it finds it

will build up into itself until it becomes a great, strong plant.

That is one way we can grow strong, children. We can reach out with our minds and get hold of all sorts of knowledge, from books, and from our teachers, and from the beautiful world in which God has placed us. And if we build up into our memories all the knowledge we find, we shall soon become very strong plants indeed. Just try it.

But the second thing I want to show you will tell you quite another way of growing strong. here it is—a picture of a river. You know how the river grows. It does not do anything but receive the little streams that flow into it as it moves along. Here they come and there, down from the far-away hills, through fields and forests and farms and towns, and all of them into one river, so that by and by it is a very great river indeed, and all it has done is simply to keep going on day after day and receiving it all.

You see, children, when you think of it, there are lots and lots of things in our lives we never could get, no matter how much we reached out after them, as this seed is going to reach out with its roots and leaves. It is God who must send them to us, and all we do is to keep still and take them. Our dear friends, our good health, our good looks, our happy homes, and noble schools, and ever so many things,—we have done almost nothing to get them, and yet God sends them. Let us be glad that we can be strengthened just by

keeping still and taking what he so kindly gives us.

The third thing I have brought to show you is a pocket-knife. Do you know how its sharp blade was hardened? They took the steel, made it red-hot, and then plunged it into cold water, and they did this again and again till it was very hard; and there was no other way of hardening it except by this process of fire.

In just this way, children, God sometimes finds it best to make us strong by fire. He plunges us into trials that seem so terrible,— our own sickness, or the sickness and death of those we love, or some bitter disappointment, or some sad failure. O, it is hard indeed to bear; but if we are true and patient, at the end we shall find ourselves all the stronger for the fiery trials through which God has made us pass, just as this knife could not have grown strong without its fiery bath.

And now for my fourth object. You do not see what it is? Well, it is just my arm. You know how it can get strong, and the only way. Yes, by exercise. The more I work it and the more it gets tired, strange to say, the more it gets able to do, and the less it gets tired in doing it.

That is just the way—the very best way of all—to strengthen your minds and hearts, dear boys and girls, as well as your bodies—set them at work, and keep them at work. Help people all you can, love people all you can, and you will soon

grow so strong that every one will come to lean on you. Try it and see.

SYMBOLS OF THE COMMANDMENTS

An Object Lesson.

It will be a great assistance to you, in fixing upon the minds of the children the Ten Commandments, in reviewing them, and getting the children to talk about them and pray about them, if you set before them ten appropriate symbols. I should write or print the Ten Commandments very distinctly, either on two great sheets of paper, one for each table of the law, or on two tablets drawn upon the blackboard. Then, as you bring up, in the course of the meeting, each commandment, hang over it as it is written the appropriate symbol. A helpful exercise on the conclusion of this may be made by taking down these symbols, removing or hiding the writing, and asking the children, as you take up each symbol, to tell what the commandment it represents is, and to repeat it.

Appropriate symbols would be the following: For the commandment regarding covetousness, a gold dollar, a purse, or a moneybag; adultery, a lily, symbolizing purity; the honoring of parents, a bit of evergreen, typifying long life; falsehood, a rule, symbolizing exactness and truth as a standard with which every statement must agree;

murder, a gold chain, representing the gold chain of love that should bind all hearts together; Sabbath-keeping, the picture of an oak, or possibly a branch from an oak-tree, standing for the strength of body and soul that can come only from the Christian observance of a seventh day of rest; graven images, simply the word "God" printed in a circle from which radiate rays of light, explaining to the children how far short of the reality any image would come; the commandment against having other gods, the picture of a straight road with a bright golden sun at the end of it and rays shining from it, telling the children that this is the straight road that leads to heaven, and that the only way to reach that happy country is to look to God and the things of heaven alone, not turning to the right hand or the left to follow other gods; swearing, the picture of an ear, with some words about the offence that swearing is to the ear of man and of God alike; stealing, the picture of steps leading upward and Godward, or possibly a set of steps made out of pasteboard, with a few words about the value of honesty in bringing about promotion in this world, and of how a departure from honesty leads one at once down into destruction.

THE LIGHTS OF ASIA

A Missionary Object Lesson.

[This plan may be applied to the Dark Continent, or, indeed, to any other mission land.]

GET a large map of Asia, or, still better, draw yourself a large outline map. Lay it flat on the table, or incline it a little so that the children can see it. It might be best to stretch it on the floor. Get a number of small candles and one large one. Fix these in wooden supports, each being separate from the others.

Tell the children about Buddha, who is called "the light of Asia," about the millions of people who worship him, and what wretched lives they live. Show how, before missionaries were sent to Asia, it was a dark continent indeed, filled with all sorts of sorrow and sin.

Your large candle has been burning all this time. Tell the children that it stands for Christ, about whom the poor people in Asia knew nothing. But there was a noble cobbler over in England at the end of the last century. His name was William Carey, and this small candle stands for him. He got all aflame with Christ (light the small candle), and after long preparation and much prayer, because it was all a new thing, he crossed the seas, and in November, 1793 (get a child to write this on the board), he landed in

India. He was the first English Protestant missionary. We will set up his candle here near Calcutta, where he worked through all his useful life.

Tell all you can about Carey's heroic life, and then go on to tell the story of the other missionary pioneers,—of Judson in Burmah, of Morrison in China, of Henry Martyn, Duff, Gilmour, Neesima, and others. Be sure to speak about the work of your own denomination, using candles of a distinctive color, and setting up one in all the countries where your denomination is at work. Have the children learn at least one date, that of Carey's arrival, and possibly others. Manipulating the candles, indicate the direction from which the missionaries came to Asia, having one candle move from an imaginary England, another from the United States, etc.

When all is done, remove the candles, and get the children to replace them in the right positions and order.

Emphasize, all through, the facts that each candle is lighted from Christ, and that these men go out in our stead, to do our work for us.

ANSON IN THE WELL

A Story to Teach What True Friendship Is.

One day Anson and his five friends were on their way to play a match game of tennis, when Anson, through carelessness, as they were push-

ing one another and joking, fell into a half-filled well, whose top was insecurely covered. Then it was that Anson found out what kind of friends he had.

One of them, whose name was Sam Selfish, satisfied himself with simply calling over the top at Anson. "Can't you get out?" he cried. "You'll be too late for the game, and our club will be beaten." And then, when Anson struggled in vain to climb the slippery sides of the well, Sam Selfish turned and ran away, lest he himself might be too late for the sport.

Another friend was John Jolly, who looked over the side of the well and laughed heartily and long. "Keep up your courage," he cried in a comforting tone; "you'll get out all right. I'll come back after the game is over and help you out, if no one comes before." And with that, John Jolly also was off to the tournament.

A third friend was Peter Porcupine, who was always sour and faultfinding. "What carelessness!" he cried, looking over the well at poor Anson. "You might have known that that board wouldn't bear your weight. You are always getting into some such fix." And having satisfied his conscience with this sharp remark, Peter also went away to join his comrades.

Silas Softy was Anson's best friend, or so Anson thought him, and Silas was greatly troubled. He was on the point of jumping down to help Anson up, or at least to stay with him until some

help could come; but just as he was about to do this silly thing, he found himself seized by the remaining boy, whose name was Simeon Sensible.

"That would do no good," cried Simeon. "You could not help him, and there would be two of you to get out instead of one." So Simeon went for a rope, and he and Silas together managed, by dint of hard pulling and a great deal of perseverance, to get Anson out of the well, though the poor fellow was too muddy and dirty and bruised to take part in the game.

Anson's five friends represent, children, five different classes of people, and you probably have one of each class, if not more, among your own friends. Sam Selfish is the friend that thinks only of himself. When his friend gets into trouble, he runs away and leaves him alone. John Jolly is good-natured, but careless. He wishes all people well, but it never occurs to him that *he* can help to make them any better or happier. Peter Porcupine is the friend who sees all the bad points in others and is not at all afraid to make mention of them, but thinks he has done his duty then, without trying to improve them. Silas Softy imitates his friends in their faults. He would be willing to jump into a well if they jumped into a well, or do anything else that was wrong and foolish if they did it. The only friend of the five that you would want, my boys and girls, is Simeon Sensible, the kind that, when his friend gets into a difficulty, helps him out; if his friend has a fault, tells him

about it, and tries to help him to get rid of it. Which kind of friend will *you* be?

ST. CHRISTOPHER

A Sermon-Story about Burden-Bearing

Did you ever hear the story of St. Christopher, my children? The story is not true, but it teaches a beautiful lesson. Here it is.

Christopher was a very strong man, whose business it was to take people across a very swift river. One night, in the midst of a terrible storm, a little child came to his door.

"Please carry me over to the other side," begged the child.

"Impossible," said Christopher. "See how dark the night is, and how wild the storm, and how angry the current."

But the child begged and begged, until at last Christopher told him to get up on his back, and he would see what could be done. Bravely he stepped off into the raging river, with the little boy on his back. But as he went on, the little boy began to grow heavier. Light as a feather at first, before Christopher had reached the middle of the stream the burden on his back was as of a full-grown man, and before he had gone three-fourths of the way the burden became more than the weight of the heaviest man in the world, so that Christopher, great giant as he was, could not stand up under it.

Then Christopher knew that it was neither boy nor man he was carrying, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Save me, Master," he cried, "for I am sinking!"

So the Lord Jesus picked up the giant who had been carrying him, and bore him safely back to his hut; and so the kind ferryman became St. Christopher, for the word "Christopher" means, you know, "Christ-bearer."

This story is not true, I said, but it teaches a true lesson, which is this: Jesus does place burdens upon his children. Often he makes them light at first, but they grow heavier and heavier and heavier. Often we do not know that Jesus is in the burden we are carrying, and often we feel like giving up. But Jesus is there, and if we will only ask him, he will pick up both us and our burden, and carry us to a place of safety and happiness.

MUDDY WATER

Or, How to Get Rid of Our Sins

[Illustrate with a little bottle of dirty water and one of pure water, to show at the close.]

THERE was once a drop of muddy water, just like the dirty water in this little bottle. It lay in the middle of one of the blackest puddles in the whole length of the road. Horses splashed through it, wheels stirred it up, drivers complained

about it, and the poor drop of water at last got thoroughly ashamed of itself.

"O, I wish I could get away from all this ugliness and meanness and dirt!" it cried.

"Well, why not?" asked the breeze, blowing over it.

"Why not? How could I?" answered the muddy drop.

"Ask the sun. He is strong and kind, and he will lift you out of the puddle."

"But the sun is far away, so far away, millions and millions of miles."

"No, his rays are here, all about you. Can't you see them, and feel them?"

"But the sun is so great, and I am so little."

"Yes, the sun is great, but not too great, you see, to send a special ray of light to shine just on you, small drop as you are."

"But I am so black, and dirty, and ugly, down here in the mire; and the sun, I am sure from his light, is pure and beautiful. I do not dare ask him."

"Never mind that. Just ask him, and see what will happen."

So the muddy drop asked the great, pure, beautiful sun to lift her up out of the disagreeable, black mud-puddle, and the sun did it at once. Up, up, up, went the drop, drawn by the sun's kind heat, until she rested in a lovely cloud, floating across the sky, and the cloud let her down on a magnificent mountain. She fell into a spring, a

perfect, mossy pool, full of the purest water that ever was.

And then the drop began to fear that she would spoil this pure water, coming into it, and so she looked at herself. And lo! she found that when the sun drew her up into the cloud she had left all the mud and impurity behind, and she was as pure as the water in this other bottle. See!

HOW NOT TO READ THE BIBLE

An Object Lesson

How to read the Bible may be very effectively taught by showing the children how not to read it, and then emphasizing the contrary.

Bring before the children a pile of books. Here is one, you see, that has its leaves stuck together, here, and here, and here. Why was that done? Because between those leaves were things the owner did not like to read, and so she stuck the pages together. You may come across commandments in the Bible that are hard to keep, and the Bible may tell you to do things you do not want to do. Some people stick those pages together with a glue called "forgetfulness," but you children will never do such a foolish thing. No; you will keep every leaf like *this,* so that you can open to all parts, and read everything that God tells you in it.

See this dirty book. Bah! how filthy. What

did it? Dirty fingers. I hope you never helped to bring beautiful, white paper into such a plight as this. You see, you can scarcely read the print, the dirt is so thick. And so, before we start to read our Bibles, let us wash our hands and make them pure; and let us do more than that,—let us ask Jesus to wash from our hearts all the badness, all the anger and fretfulness and pride, because these things will spoil our Bible-reading as quickly as dirt on our hands.

Here is a book with the pages uncut. You can read here, and here, but who will ever know what is in *here,* where the leaves are uncut? That is a foolish way to keep a book, you say; but are you sure your Bible is not about as badly off? The pages are all cut, I suppose, but if there are parts of the Bible that you never look into, it's about as bad as if the leaves were uncut, isn't it? Let us read all parts of the Bible.

Here is a sheet of glass,—black glass. I am going to put it over this page, and ask some of you sharp-eyed boys and girls to read a few words. You cannot make out a letter? Well, I have done this to show you why some folks cannot read the Bible. They put in front of it their bad, black tempers, or their cloudy selfishness, and such things hide all the comforting words of the blessed book. Take away the black and gloomy glass, children, if you want to read the Bible.

KNIGHTS AND DRAGONS

A Sermon-Story.

I WANT to tell you about a boy who was very fond of stories of adventure. He liked especially to read about the old knights, and how they fought with giants, and killed dragons, and rescued beautiful ladies. One day he was talking about it with his mother, and he asked whether there were no knights any longer in the world, and if he couldn't be a knight and kill dragons. "Couldn't I, mother?" he asked. "Wait awhile," answered his mother, "and I will tell you."

That very morning our lad, whose name was Sam, went with his mother to market. On the way they saw an old woman, who had let fall a basket of apples in the middle of the muddy street. She was nervously trying to pick them up before any cart should come along. Sam was walking by when his mother said, "Kill your dragon, Sam." "What dragon!" asked Sam, startled. "Why, your pride, which is keeping you from helping that wrinkled old princess out there in the mud." So Sam darted off, and helped the old woman pick up her apples.

After dinner mother was washing the dishes, and little baby Helen was troubling her by pulling on her dress, and crying. It was one of Helen's fretful days. "Sam!" called his mother, "come quick. Here's another princess to rescue!"

"Who?" asked Sam, running in. "Don't you see?" answered his mother. "Here am I, attacked by the giants Worry and Work and Hindrance. Come to my help." So Sam took little Helen, and played with her while his mother washed the dishes.

"Sam," said his father when he came home that night,—Sam's father was a deacon and led the Wednesday evening prayer meeting that week,—"I think you are old enough to say just a word in prayer meeting. It will help some of the other boys and girls to take part; yes, and some of the older folks, too. Won't you repeat a short verse, if I help you find one?" Sam hesitated, and then he caught his mother's eye. "Brave for others, be a knight," that loving glance seemed to say, and Sam took part in the prayer meeting that night.

LAMPWICKS

An Object Lesson Concerning Gluttony

[Let the lamp that is used be one with a clear glass bowl, through which both oil and wick can be seen. For burning the oil, put a little in a saucer.]

I WANT you to see what is in this lamp. Here is a bowl, full of clear oil. In it is a wick, and the wick sucks up the oil. Up the oil goes, through the neck of the lamp, into the burner, and is ready to make a clear light. I will strike a match, and show you. The oil has crept up, you

see, very slowly, and just enough of it, so that the light is kept right, not flaring, and not smouldering.

What would happen if the wick were not there, to feed in the oil in just the right way and in just the right amounts? I will show you. Here is some oil all by itself, without a wick, and I will light it. You see how it acts,—a big light for a minute, and that is the end of it.

Now I want to tell you how these two things I have shown you remind me of two boys. One is Gilbert Glutton, and the other is Tommy Temperate. Can you guess which is which? Tommy Temperate is like the lamp. He eats and he drinks just what he can use, just what he can turn into a manly, bright boy. He doesn't eat so little that he grows puny, or so much that he grows lazy and sleepy and sick. It is just as if he had a wick to feed him. When he gets enough, he stops. And the result is that he is as bright as this lamp, and brighter.

But Gilbert Glutton is like the oil that burned in this saucer. He eats without any restraint; and he drinks, when he gets anything he likes to drink, until he makes himself sick. And so he is dull to look at, and almost as wretched as this blackened saucer. Instead of eating and drinking pure and healthful things, that he could build up into a strong and manly boy, his drink is chiefly coffee and tea and soda water, and his food is candy and cake and pie. Now which would you

rather be like, Gilbert Glutton or Tommy Temperate?

BULBS

An Easier Object Lesson

HERE are two pots of earth. One is crowned with a beautiful Easter lily, pure, and white, and beautiful, rising out of its green leaves. The other is all black and ugly. But what is this? A bulb, an Easter lily bulb. See! I will plant it in the black earth, and now both flower-pots are alike, are they not? They both contain an Easter lily.

What, you think they are different? To be sure, one is beautiful and the other is still ugly and black; but I am going to water the last, and make it grow, until it is just as lovely as the other. But what must the bulb I just planted be thinking about, down there in the close, black soil? Little it guesses of the beauty and the light and the joy into which it is going to spring up, some day.

Now do you know why Christ came to earth? It was for many reasons, but this was one of the chief: to tell us that we are really buried in the close, black soil, just as this bulb I planted a minute ago. You look at the great, blue sky, and the wide, green earth, and you cry, "Buried? Why, how can that be?" but Christ came to tell us of a country as much more lovely and bright and happy than this world, as *it* is brighter and better than the black ground beneath our feet; so

that we can fairly call ourselves buried while we live here, and can think about that next world as our time of rising and blooming.

Have you ever seen the husk that the seed or the bulb leaves behind it when it springs up into the beautiful flower? I will show you one. And now you know what a dead body is. When you die, your body will lie all still and lifeless as this cast-off husk, but you will be gone; you will be far above the body that you have lived in so long, in a lovely new world, and with a lovely new body, as much more beautiful than your old one as this lovely lily is more beautiful than this shrivelled husk. Now are you not glad that Christ lived down here, and died, and rose again, to prove to us all these wonderful things?

TOOLS

An Object Talk about the Use of Pain

What is this? A chisel. And what is this? A chisel, too. But what a difference! The first is bright and clean, sharp at the edge, and beautiful as well as useful. The second is black and rusty, ugly to look at, and as for the edge, it is so battered that you could cut almost as well with a piece of wood as with it. What made the difference? Why, some one has taken good care of the first tool, and no care has been taken of the second.

Put your fingers on your lips. What tools are

hidden back of them? Ah, now you show them when you smile! Yes, dozens of pretty, white chisels, far more wonderful than any chisel ever made by man. Have you ever seen teeth black and ragged at the edges and with holes in them, almost useless, and very painful? How did they get in that condition? Why, just as the ugly chisel did; no one took care of them.

Ah, but what happens when your teeth begin to get out of order, begin to get rough on the edges, and with holes in them? They ache, and you are in very great pain. The chisel doesn't mind when a careless man knocks a piece out of it, or leaves it out to rust in the rain. Do you wish your teeth were like the chisel? No, indeed; not if you are sensible. For if your teeth didn't ache as soon as they were out of order, I fear they would crumble entirely away before you would go to the dentist.

That's one important reason, then, why God sends us pain; it is to warn us to take better care of ourselves. Suppose I were to stick this pin into my hand. It would hurt, and I wouldn't go very far. But if my skin were as dull and unfeeling as leather, I might cut myself terribly without knowing it, and I should not be half as careful to keep out of danger. Let us all thank the good Father that he has not made us without nerves, like the sticks and stones, but sends us pain and sickness to warn us when we are not taking care of ourselves.

THE BLUES

An Object Lesson in Happiness

If you are near any school that has even a small assortment of physical apparatus, the instrument for the following illustration may be obtained ready made. Otherwise, paint a circular disk of cardboard, one-third blue, one-third red, and one-third yellow. Fasten this to a block of wood in such a way that it can be revolved rapidly.

Cover all but the blue, and ask the children what it means to have the blues. What gives them the blues? Yes, there are bad things in life, cross words, and hard lessons, and tasks to do, and rainy days, and headaches. And when we look at those things alone, life looks all blue, just like this piece of cardboard.

But look! Here is something else that ought to be in every life, to drive the blues out. You see, one-third of the disk is bright red. What is the color of your blood? Red. So we'll let this beautiful scarlet stand for your own hearty work, that you do with your hands and your feet and your brains. Work is a great thing to drive out the blues.

But that isn't all. I turn the disk, and you see that the last third of it is yellow. What does that stand for? It stands for the beautiful, golden sunshine of God's love. Set that into your life, and it will drive out the blues better than anything

else in the world,—better even than work, fine as that is.

And now I suppose you want to see how all this is going to work, and you want me to prove to you that, if you mix with your blue feelings a lot of scarlet work and of golden love, the blue will all go away. I will mix all these colors by turning them rapidly, and I want you to watch. The disk is white now, you see, and it has the blues no longer.

SHOES

A Talk Illustrated by the Children Themselves

When you leave this room, children, what are you going to walk on? On the cobblestones in the street? On gravel? On brick? On the concrete sidewalk? Oh, no. Look at your shoes. Yes, you know now. You are going to walk on leather.

It will make no difference to you what is under the leather, will it? Sharp pebbles may be there, or bits of glass, or a speck of mud, but none of these things will trouble you, because you are not walking on them, but on—? Yes, on leather.

You can understand, now, the wise proverb that the far-away Persians repeat, "To him who wears a shoe the whole earth is covered with leather." Up hill, down dale, in rough places or smooth, everywhere the smooth, stout leather is under our

feet, and so all places are made smooth and safe by it.

Now have you ever thought what shoes you must put on if you want to walk in God's ways? The Bible, that tells everything, tells this also. If you will hunt up Eph. 6:15 you will find out. "Your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." So that instead of leather, when we walk with God, our feet must be covered with peace. How can that be?

You meet some one and speak pleasantly, yet get nothing but a frown in reply. If you want to walk with God and wear shoes made of peace, you must go on your way with a cheerful smile, and a little prayer for the poor and unhappy child that can only frown, and cannot laugh.

You want to go skating, and instead your mother asks you to go on an errand for her. If you want to walk with God and wear shoes made of peace, you must kiss your mother and bound off on the errand, and go skating afterwards, if mother is willing.

There is a poor child with cheap and ugly clothes. Your schoolmates may make fun of her, just because she is poor, and refuse to play or walk with her. Never mind. If you want to walk with God, and wear beautiful shoes made of peace, you will walk and play with this poor child of God's, and make her more happy.

Do you see something of what is meant by being shod with the gospel of peace? It means

to be kind and loving and helpful everywhere our feet carry us, just as Christ, everywhere he went, was kind and loving and helpful.

And you will remember that we found out that putting on shoes made of leather really covered the whole earth with leather for us. So putting on these wonderful shoes made of peace will cover the whole world with peace for us. It will make no difference to us how many sharp words and hard tasks and ugly frowns we meet. If we are "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," our walk will be peaceful, no matter what we are walking on. Try it.

And I have left to the last the very strangest thing about the whole matter. Suppose you were walking along this street in front of the church, wearing your best shoes. And suppose you were to turn off on a side street. What would you think if your shoes were suddenly to disappear, and leave you to walk on the sharp stones without any leather to protect you?

That would be strange indeed, but that is exactly what happens to these wonderful shoes made of peace. They cannot be worn except on God's ways. Just as sure as we turn off on some side street where God does not want us to go, the beautiful shoes of peace drop from our feet and disappear, and we go limping and hobbling along, in great pain, though we sometimes pretend that we are enjoying it.

How can we ever get the beautiful shoes back

again, do you ask? It's the easiest thing in the world. All we have to do is to go back to God's way, and the shoes will fly back to our torn and weary feet, and everything will be pleasant and peaceful again.

Now, children, the next time you are cross, or disobedient, or unhappy, or angry,—*look at your feet!*

You will see at once that the beautiful shoes of peace have slipped off, and I would advise you to hurry back to God's ways again. Will you?

PASS IT ON

A Little Talk for Thanksgiving Day—and Other Days

The clouds rise out of the ocean,—great, rain-filled clouds,—and they empty out the rain over the land. The brook is fed by it, and it is so happy that it gurgles and splashes and leaps and sparkles, and what do you think it does with the rain that the clouds give it? Why, it rushes off with it to the ocean, and pours it all back where it came from. The ocean is so big and the brook is so little that you would think it would keep some of the beautiful water; but it doesn't. It gives it all back. Don't you think that God's children ought to give back to him some of the many blessings he gives them?

The sap flows from the ground into the roots of the great oak; but the roots pass it on, nearly all of it, to the trunk; and the trunk passes it on, nearly all of it, to the leaves; and the leaves, after a while, fall off and decay, going back into the ground again, so that the ground gets back nearly all it gave to the tree. Why doesn't the tree keep it all? The great earth could surely afford to lose it. But no; the tree is glad to throw off its leaves and cover the earth and enrich it, since the earth is so good to trees. Don't you think that God's children ought to give back to him some of the many blessings he gives them?

THE CHANGED CROSS

An Illustration of Trouble and How to Transform It to Joy

PREPARE a large cross, making it of pasteboard or of wood; it should be as large as a child could well carry. Paint one half of it black,—or stone color, if you can imitate the stone exactly,—and the other side gilt. Place the cross before the children in such a position that they can see only the black side.

Begin with telling them what Christ said about bearing our crosses. Show how he himself had to carry his cross on the way to Calvary, and set before the children a picture of that sad scene. Tell

them of the heavier cross that Christ had to bear,—the weight of all the world's sins and sorrows.

We also have crosses to bear. Let this cross represent them. Let us put names to this cross. What shall it stand for? What are some of the things that you young Christians have to bear for Christ? People's laughing at you for trying to follow Christ? Yes, that is one cross, certainly. See; I have printed "laugh" on this card, and I will fasten it to the cross. And what are other crosses we must carry? Sickness? failure? disappointment? poverty? lameness? Here are cards with those names written upon them.

By this time the cross will be covered on its black side. You will have spoken of it all through as a *heavy* cross, a *stone* cross or *iron* cross. Now you call upon the children to pick out the strongest boy in their number to come and bear the cross. He comes forward and easily lifts it and carries it on his shoulder. You have him turn the golden side toward the children.

Ah, crosses are never heavy when you take them up in Christ's strength and carry them bravely. They are never black, then, but they shine like gold. Everything about the cross is changed, when you carry it in Christ's strength. The laughter is changed; you get strength out of it. We will throw away the label, "laugh," and we will pin upon the black side this bright, golden label, marked "strength." What is one good thing that will come out of our *sickness,* if it is borne

with Christ's strength? Patience? Yes; let us throw away "sickness," and fasten in its place this golden label, "patience." So proceed with the others, putting in the place of each some good thing that may come out of it, such as "courage" from "failure," "peace" from "disappointment," "soul wealth" from "poverty," "soul swiftness" from "lameness."

Close with the thought that it is Christ that makes all these changes in our crosses, and get the children to say together, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."

PAUL'S COURSE

An Object Lesson, Reviewing Paul's Life

[Make the mile-stones used in this talk as large as convenient, and of wood or pasteboard.]

BEGIN by saying that many years ago there was a very good and brave man, one of the best and bravest men named in the Bible, who said, not long before he was put to death: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course." *Who* said that? If the children do not know, tell them a few more facts about Paul, until they have discovered whom you mean.

Paul was looking back over a wonderful life when he said he had finished his course. He was comparing it to a race course or to a journey, and there are many great mile-posts he could see as

he gazed back over the way he had come. I will stretch this tape line along the table, and it shall stand for Paul's course; that is, for his noble life. Now we are going to set up the mile-posts along this course.

The first mile-post we must set up, I am sorry to say, is an ugly black one. Do you know what is the first thing the New Testament tells us about Paul? Yes, that he was helping in the stoning of that glorious martyr, Stephen. He was looking on, and encouraging the men that threw the stones. Those were indeed black days in Paul's life.

Ah, but the next mile-stone is a very different one. What scene does this beautiful golden mile-stone bring to mind? Yes, Paul is on the Damascus road now, and the great light is shining around him, and he has seen Jesus. He will never be disobedient to that heavenly vision.

In the same way the speaker will go on, setting up the mile-stones along the tape line, and bringing out with each (using the children's memories as much as possible) some leading event in Paul's life. Take them up in chronological order. A sky-blue mile-stone is the appointment as a missionary. A mile-post colored gray to represent stone stands for the stoning of Paul. A silver mile-post represents the call to Macedonia. A mile-post painted to represent marble will remind the children of Paul's speech among the temples and statues of Mars' Hill. A post painted to look

like iron, marks the place Paul had reached when he told about finishing his course—the prison and iron chains at Rome. Only one mile-post was left—this beautiful post with the green wreath on top, the goal-post. "Henceforth," said the great Christian hero, "there is laid up for me a crown." Yes, and Paul said that this same crown is ready in heaven for all who love God.

PETER'S FALL

A Blackboard Talk

You may get before the children a good picture of Peter's life by the use of a simple line drawn upon the blackboard, pinning upon it at intervals various objects to symbolize the different stages of his career. Tell how he was a fisherman when Christ called him to become his disciple, and draw a little section of the line, pinning upon it a small net to represent Peter's fishing-net, or possibly the picture of a boat. As you go on in the story, draw the line constantly rising, pinning upon it a picture of water in a storm, to bring to mind Peter's walking upon the waves; a piece of bread, to remind the children of the feeding of the five thousand, in which Peter helped; a bright circle of gilt paper or a picture of a mountain, to stand for the transformation scene, at which Peter was present; a block of stone (to be attached by means of a string), to represent Peter's great confession. At

this point the line has risen very high, but give it a sudden downward turn, representing a precipice. Peter has fallen. He has denied his Lord in that terrible scene in the courtyard at the trial.

But Peter did not stay down at the foot of the precipice very long. See! his line begins to rise again. Pin upon it the picture of a fish, to represent that breakfast by the seashore with the risen Lord, his searching question, thrice repeated, "Lovest thou me?" and his thrice repeated command, "Feed my sheep," "Feed my lambs."

And Peter did do this. He became the boldest of all the disciples. No more denying Christ for him! As the line rises, tell about the great miracle of Pentecost, representing it by a tongue of scarlet; then tell about the deliverance from prison, representing it by a little chain broken in two; and then finally, at the very summit where the line runs off the board, place a cross upside down, since Peter, as it is said, suffered the same cruel death as his Lord, only he insisted on being crucified with his head down, thinking it too much honor to be crucified just as Christ had been. Peter fell terribly; yes, but with Christ's help he rose grandly, as, with the same help, we also may rise out of all our sins.

THE OLD COAT

An Object Lesson upon the Changed Life

Begin by telling the story of how Paul persecuted the Christians, and how wonderfully he was transformed into Paul the heroic missionary. Now this same Paul, in later years, was writing to one of his churches, the church of the Colossians, and he said that the life of any one who knew nothing about Christ, or did not do what he knew Christ wanted him to do, is like an old coat.

Here call up one of the boys and put on him a tattered and dirty garment—the worst looking affair you can find. Paul named some of these rags and dirt spots. He called one of them "anger," and we will pin this label on the coat over this great rent. Another he called "filthy communications," thinking, may be, about the foul talk that boys are likely to hear if they go with the wrong sort of companions. We will pin this label above this great grease spot. In this way go on with Paul's list, as given in Col. 3, adding any others you choose.

When the coat is pretty well covered, go on to say how Paul advised us to become Christians, and throw off this ragged and filthy coat, and Christ would give us a new, pure, and beautiful one. Here have the boy take off the dirty coat and fling it as far from him as he can, while you bring out a fine new garment and put it on him.

Paul gave names to this new coat also. He said it was made up of all the things written upon the labels I am pinning on—made up of "kindness," and "patience," "meekness," "forgiveness," "humility," "love," "peace," "thankfulness," "the Word of God."

The first set of labels should be as ugly as possible—printed on coarse brown paper, with ragged edges. The second set of labels should be as neat and handsome as you can make them.

THE BURIED BIBLE

An Object Lesson on Bible-Study

Begin by telling the beautiful story of the young king Josiah, of how the Bible was discovered hidden in the rubbish of the neglected temple, and of how Josiah caused the book to be honored. Go on to tell the children that often nowadays the Bible is buried, though not in quite the same kind of rubbish that buried it in the time of Josiah. You will have in the room a big box, as ugly as possible, or a torn old basket, and you will tell the children that a Bible, you believe, is buried there. Will they help you to get it out?

Call up the children one by one, and let each remove one thing from the basket. The first to come out may be a base-ball bat. Yes, sometimes our play buries the Bible. Have you never been so much interested in your play, children, that you

had no time to give to your Bible-reading or to study your Sunday-school lesson?

The next child brings out a pile of brightly colored picture-books. Yes, time enough to read all these, but no time to read the Bible. Is not that so, very often, children?

In the same way all sorts of hindrances to Bible-reading and studying may be brought out. There will be a school-book or a slate. There will be a pocketbook, since the love of money keeps a great many from their Bibles. There will be a pretty silk waist, a pile of Sunday newspapers, a set of tools to represent their work, a package of letters to their friends, containing also a lot of invitations to parties.

And at the bottom is found a package wrapped in coarse brown paper. This is removed, and under it is found a layer of white paper, and under that a layer of silver paper, and under that a layer of gilt paper, and then comes a beautiful copy of the Bible.

Shall we not go home, children, and dig out our Bibles, no matter what is on top of them?

BLIND EYES

An Object Lesson Teaching Gratitude for Our Eyes

First show the children something of the value of the gift of sight. Ask them to shut their eyes

and feel the objects you put into their hands, trying to tell what they are. Blindfold one of the children, and get him to try to find a certain corner of the room, and bring you an object you have placed there. Darken the room, if you can, and then let in a sudden flood of beautiful sunshine. Ask the children to fold their hands and say together softly: "Lord Jesus, I thank thee for my eyes."

Then go on to tell the story, as found in John 9: 1-11, of the man blind from birth, whose eyes Christ opened by placing clay upon them and having him wash in the Pool of Siloam. You may illustrate this in a vivid and even startling way. Draw a face, with its eyes open. You may find a picture large enough for your purpose. Draw, upon paper like the paper upon which the face is drawn, two eyes of the same size as the eyes in the face, but closed. Fasten these upon the face, each with a single little pin, so that they may easily be removed. As you tell the story of the miracle, place over these closed eyes circles of cardboard painted clay color, and mucilaged on the back. Moisten this mucilage as you tell how Jesus moistened the clay. Of course, as you remove the "clay" in speaking of the washing in the Pool of Siloam, it will carry the closed eyes with it, and the change in the face will greatly surprise and interest the children. They will never forget the story of that miracle.

AT THE POOL OF BETHESDA

A Blackboard Talk

An interesting and sufficient blackboard illustration of the miracle at the pool of Bethesda may easily be made by any one, whether he knows how to draw or not. Let an oval drawn with blue chalk represent the pool. Close to the pool place a large number of short horizontal marks to represent sick men, and beside each draw an upright mark, representing some friend ready to put the sick man into the water at just the right minute. Some have several of these friends beside them, and one person of importance has around him quite a company of helpers.

And here, off to one side and behind the rest, is a horizontal mark, a poor sick man all alone, with no one to help him. Only one sick man can be cured, and what chance has he? He has come here often before, but it has always been the same way. He has no friend, and he is too sick to struggle for himself.

Ah, but here comes his helper! Represent Jesus by an upright red mark, placed beside the lonely sick man. Tell about the conversation between the two, and Christ's blessed words, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Quickly rub out the horizontal white mark, and draw it upright, standing beside the red mark. The miracle has been wrought.

THE BEATITUDE SPECTRUM

An Object Lesson and Blackboard Talk

Use Drummond's famous illustration of the Beatitudes,—the spectrum. If the sun is shining into the room, take a prism and throw a spectrum upon white paper, getting the children to name the colors in order,—violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, red. Write these upon the blackboard, each of them in the appropriate color, as far as you can. If the sun will not shine into the room, paint a large spectrum, naming each color.

Next get the children to read or recite the Beatitudes, and write one of them opposite each color of the spectrum, using chalk of the same colors. One will remain over, the Beatitude for the persecuted, which you will represent by white, since persecution brings out all the other good qualities named, and brings with it all the other rewards.

Then go on to tell brief Bible stories illustrating each of the Beatitudes. Do not say which Beatitude you are illustrating, but before you begin, ask the children to listen and guess. Start with the easiest to guess and go on to the hardest. Start, for instance, with the peacemakers.

The following Bible stories may be used, but many others may readily be found: the poor in spirit—the story of Job, whose afflictions were removed as soon as he gave up his pride and began to pray for his friends; the mourners—Mary and

Martha at the grave of Lazarus; the meek—Christ before Pilate; the hungry for righteousness—Solomon's wise choice; the merciful—David's sparing Saul in the cave; the pure in heart—John's vision of God and heaven; the peacemakers—Jonathan's intercession for his friend David; the persecuted—Paul's rejoicing in prison.

As each Beatitude is guessed, check it off as an aid to guessing the others.

SPREADING THE LIGHT

An Object Lesson in Christian Testimony

TELL the beautiful story of King Hezekiah's great passover, as found in 2 Chron. 30. You will have prepared on a large sheet of paper an outline map of Palestine, showing the portions of the country occupied by the twelve tribes, each bearing the name plainly marked. Lay this flat on a table, and place on each of the twelve divisions a pretty little candle, unlighted. Tell how dark the land had become, light after light having gone out. They had forgotten the Bible. They had not been observing the holy days. They had neglected that great feast of gratitude, the passover. No wonder God had permitted many of them to be taken captive by the cruel Assyrians!

Then tell how light came to good King Hezekiah, and how he made up his mind that his people should worship God as they used to do. With this, light the candle at Judah.

Next tell the story of Hezekiah's messengers, sent up and down the land to carry the light, to call the people back to worship God, and to invite them all to come to Jerusalem and keep the passover. As you tell this, move the Judah candle to each division in turn, and imagine at each a conversation: "Come, all ye people, give up your idols. What have they ever done for you? Have they kept you from the Assyrians? Let us go back to the true God. Do you not remember how he led our fathers out of Egypt? how he brought our people through the Red Sea? how he conquered this land for us? Let us pray to him that he will deliver our dear ones that are held in cruel bondage. Come up to Jerusalem to the passover, as God has commanded." Thus they will speak, and you will imagine and repeat the replies.

As each division is invited, if it accepts the invitation, light its candle from the first one and carry it down to Jerusalem till all are there except Simeon and Naphtali. Those will be left unlighted, standing in their places. Describe the joyous passover, and then send each candle home to burn in its own country. Close by applying the lesson to the lives of the children. Show them how each of them can light a little candle and hold it out where others can get a light from it. No one knows how far even a little light will travel.

DOWN GOES THE DRUNKARD

A Temperance Object Lesson

TAKE a large number of blocks, and before the meeting build up a square pile one block thick and about twenty blocks square. Tell the children that the top represents a road, along which a bright young fellow set out to go to the Castle of Happiness, where were all good things for him to enjoy and use. Describe the beauties of the road and of the castle at the end of it.

But our young man fell in with bad companions, and the first thing he knew, they had pulled him down into a lower road—just one step lower, but it would be harder to reach the Castle of Happiness from that road. (Here remove the top layer of blocks, all but the first block, making one step down.)

It was not long before the young man got into the habit of swearing. The other fellows did it, and why should not he? He thought it sounded big and manly. In reality, it pulled him down to another road a little lower than the second road, and from it it would be a little more up-hill work to get to the Castle of Happiness. (Here remove the second line of blocks, all but two, making two steps down.)

In the same way proceed, making with your blocks successive steps downwards. Disobedience to parents, the first glass, gambling, stealing, the

gutter, the prison, death,—these may be made the steps downward. At the end make a precipice with your remaining layers of blocks. It will stand for the drunkard's final ruin. No drunkard can enter the kingdom of heaven.

WALK IN THE LIGHT

An Object Talk on the Joys of the Christian Life

MAKE a sand tray. Get a long pasteboard tube and paint it black inside and out. Bury it in the sand so that only the opening is visible. Cover the sand all around it with a layer of beautiful moss to represent grass, with here and there a branch of evergreen to represent trees, and with bunches of flowers placed in skillfully hidden vases. Fashion little winding roads through the moss. Insert here and there bits of mirror to represent lakes and rivers. Make the whole as attractive as possible.

Direct the children's attention, one by one, to the beauties of the imaginary country you have laid out before them, and then turn to the black tunnel, up to the mouth of which you have run one of your sand roads. What would the children think of a man who should deliberately leave all the lovely things outside and choose to walk in this black tunnel? Why, inside there is nothing but thorns (draw out some dead, prickly plant), and stones, and ugly crawling things (draw out these —a toy snake may represent the "crawling things").

Yet here comes a man walking along this lovely road (use a toy man—or even a spool may be made to answer), enjoying everything beautiful he sees and hears. And look! he is walking right into the tunnel.

Children, that tunnel is sin. Have you not noticed how black the world is when you do anything wrong? When you say a cross word, or tell a lie, or cheat at school, or disobey your mother? Have you noticed that? Well, it was because you were just getting into this tunnel.

How can you get out? Christ can let you out. He is the only one that can. If you pray to him, he will break right into this great, black tunnel, (the tube has been cut in two and you break it across at this point), and he can let in the light and let out the man. Do you remember what Christ called himself? "I am the Light of the world," he said. This is the way he is the Light of the world. "Walk in the light."

THE DISSECTED PRAYER

Illustrations of the Lord's Prayer

DIVIDE the Lord's Prayer into the eight sections named below, and print each in large letters upon a long strip of cardboard or pasteboard, the whole being arranged so that it may be fitted together upon a blackboard or screen. Paint each section differently, as indicated below:—

Our Father who art in heaven—gold.

Hallowed be thy name—green (the thought being of evergreen).

Thy kingdom come—purple, the royal color.

Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven—blue, the sky color.

Give us this day our daily bread—yellow, the bread color.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors—silver, in thought of coins.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil—red, which represents sin, and also Christ's blood, which delivers us from sin.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.—white, since this sums up all the colors.

At the meeting, these sections will be held by eight children, who will come forward one by one when called for, hand in their portions of the prayer, and at the same time read them aloud. The speaker will talk a little about each section of the prayer as it is handed in, telling its meaning, and illustrating it by some story from the Bible. The stories I suggest are:—

Our Father—what Christ said about God's care for the world, that not a sparrow falls without his knowledge.

Hallowed be thy name—the giving of the Ten Commandments, and especially the third one.

Thy kingdom come—Christ's parable of the mustard seed.

Thy will be done—Christ's prayer in Gethsemane.

Our daily bread—Elijah fed by the ravens, or the story of the manna.

Forgive us our debts—the parable of the unjust steward.

Lead us not into temptation—the story of Christ's temptation.

For thine is the glory—John's vision of the glorified Christ.

After each section, as it is thus considered, have the children repeat that part of the prayer softly together. When the entire prayer has been talked over, and stands in its various colored sections before the children, have them all fold their hands and repeat the whole of it together.

FOSSILS

An Object Lesson on Selfishness

CHILDREN, what does this look like? An animal? Yes; but what is it made of? Stone; limestone. How did the limestone get into this shape? You think some one carved it? Ah, no! It was once a living creature, of just this size and shape.

How did the animal turn to stone? It took many weeks, possibly many months or years. Bit by bit the water carried away part of the shell of the animal, and left limestone in its place, until it

became all limestone. We call it a fossil, and haven't you heard men called fossils, too, when they are dull and stupid and half dead?

Well, just what happened to that animal when it became a fossil may happen to your hearts, my dear boys and girls, if you don't look out. They may become hardened. They may become hearts of stone. Of course I don't mean that the little red bundle of muscle that is beating away in your body will become limestone, but I mean that the part of you that loves and prays and learns about God may become as cold and dead as any stone you ever saw.

How can you help it? By using your heart in the right way. Love with all your might, pray with all your might, help and sympathize and learn all you can, and the petrifying fluid cannot get at your heart. Do you know what this petrifying liquid is called? It is called selfishness.

SIR TONGUE

A Talk about Speaking for Christ

You have, each one of you, a little red-coated soldier. He lives in a little red cave, fenced in with two rows of ivory pickets. You know who this little soldier is. We call him Sir Tongue.

Now Sir Tongue ought to be a soldier in God's army. Is he? Sometimes he is, sometimes he is not; but he should be always.

Whenever anybody swears, or lies about any one else, or uses harsh and unkind words, or sneers at God's people, this little red-coated soldier should step forth, ready and eager to do what he can for his Master.

Why doesn't he always? Well, there are several enemies that this brave-looking soldier is often afraid to face. One is named "It's none of your business." When "It's none of your business" draws his sword, it's pitiful to see how quickly Sir Tongue flies back into his red cave. It *is* his business, just the same, and he knows it.

Another of Sir Tongue's enemies is "O what a goody goody!" Sir Tongue knows that he isn't a "goody goody," and doesn't think he acts like one; but yet, just as soon as "O what a goody goody!" flies at him, he retreats back of his ivory fences.

A third enemy is called Major Sneer. Sir Tongue knows that Major Sneer, for all his bluster, is a coward, and yet Major Sneer can often put him to flight.

Still a fourth enemy is General Laugh. General Laugh has a big title, and his uniform glistens in the sun, but there isn't anything to him. If you touch him, he bursts like a bubble. And yet how afraid of him Sir Tongue is, to be sure!

O boys and girls, teach Sir Tongue that if he has God on his side, he need never be afraid to speak! And God is always on his side when he is trying to speak for Him.

HE MADE THEM

An Object Lesson about God and What He Is Like

CHILDREN, I have drawn a flower on the board. That is one of the beautiful things God has made. I want you to tell me about other beautiful things God has made, and as you tell me, I will write them down under the flower. What do you think of a God who made all these beautiful things? He must be beautiful, too, must he not?

I have drawn next to the flower a great rock. That is one of the strong things God has made. Let us make a list of others. What do all these things tell us about God? That he is strong.

Here, next to the rock, is a house. Let us suppose that it is your home. What are some of the happy things to be found in it? I'll write them down. There's love, and pleasantness, and helpfulness, and watchfulness, and a long list besides. But God made your home, and everything in it; so these things, too, tell us about God.

But above all I will draw a Bible. Who is the great Being that this book tells you lived once on the earth, and died at Jerusalem, and rose again? Will you tell me some things about Christ? Yes; he was sympathizing, and kind, and lived for others, and pitied the sick and healed them. Whatever is true of Christ is true of God, for Christ was God in human form.

And so, when you want to see what God is like, you may look at the beautiful, and strong, and loving things God has made, and, best of all, you may look at Christ, who is God himself.

PITFALLS

A Blackboard Talk about Our Daily Dangers

Did you ever go, by night, near a deep well, that had no cover over its mouth? How you shrank from its black, horrid opening! Let me tell you something. All around you there are just such dangerous pitfalls, though you cannot see them. They are not pitfalls into which your bodies can fall, but pitfalls for your mind and your heart, and that is far worse. I will draw some of them on the blackboard, and you may name them.

Here we are going along a perfectly plain, straightforward path. We got up in the morning sweet and sunny. But something has happened that we did not like, and our brows wrinkle, and our hands are clinched, and our teeth are set, and mean thoughts rush to our head, and mean words to our tongues, and—look out! Right in our way is a great, yawning pitfall, and we have almost tumbled in! I wonder how many can tell me what name to write over the mouth of it. But, children, if we love Jesus, he will whisper to us gently, and lay his kind hand on our shoulders, and turn us to one side, this way, and we'll go around the black pitfall of anger, and get safely to the other side.

We travel on a little further in the day, and find nothing to frighten or hurt us. But, all of a sudden, some one asks us to help him a little. It may be mother, who wants us to dust a room; or father, who wants us to run an errand. And our brows knot up again, and we grow sullen, and—dear me!—we have almost fallen into this great, black, deep pit! Name it, children. But if we are Christ's boys and girls, the dear Saviour will save us from falling into this pit of selfishness, just as he kept us out of the pit of anger. We'll gladly do the little, helpful deed that is asked of us, and thus get around the pitfall, and on to a straight, beautiful road again.

In a similar way let the superintendent talk about the pitfalls of idleness, and intemperance, and pride, and carelessness, and so on.

TALKING WITH MOTHER

A Sermon Story to Teach about Prayer

John and Jennie were sent to a school far away from their home. They did not mind anything, except being away from their good, loving mother. And yet their mother did the best she could to keep them from being homesick. She sent them all sorts of good things, and pretty things, and useful things from home, and she wrote them hosts of letters. Then, too, John and Jennie could often talk to each other about their mother, and one day

they tried to think up how many ways their mother had of talking with them, though she was so far away.

"There are the letters," said John. "That's one."

"There are all these beautiful presents she keeps sending us," said Jennie. "I'm sure every one of them keeps talking to me all the time, and says, 'I love you, I love you.'"

"Yes, that's two," said John. "And then, do you know, I often remember things mother used to say to me, and when I think of her I can hear her saying the same things. I sat in a draught the other day, and I could hear her say, 'Move your chair or you'll take cold,' just as plain!"

"That's three," agreed Jennie; "and here's the fourth. It's when you tell me that you know mother wouldn't want me to do this, and would want me to do that. I can almost hear mother saying the same things."

"But after all," said John, "there's one way of talking with mother that's better than all, and that's right face to face. O, when *will* the last day of school come?"

Let the speaker explain to the children how these five ways in which children may talk with their absent mother correspond with ways in which we talk with our Father in heaven. The letters correspond to our Bible. The presents correspond to the gifts of food God sends us, and of raiment, and of all the lovely and useful things in the world.

Then, when we think about what God would like to have us do, and remember his commands and promises, we are enjoying the third way of talking with God. And others may talk with us about God, and tell us what he would have us do, just as John and Jennie talked with each other about their mother.

But, after all, the fifth way is the best,—talking face to face with God. And for that we do not need to wait to go to heaven, as John and Jennie must wait to go home to talk with their mother, because God is everywhere, and is always ready to talk with us, whenever we wish to pray to him.

MIRRORS

An Object Lesson on Love

WHERE does all the light in this room come from? Yes, from the sun (or from a lamp, or other light, if it is night). Here is a pretty little mirror. If it wants the light, how must I turn it? Yes, toward the sun. And here is another mirror. If I want to get light from it, what must I do? That's right; I must turn the first mirror on it.

Suppose there are two girls, Mary and Lucy, who do not love each other. How can we get them to loving each other? Well, it is just as it was with the mirrors.

All the love in the world comes from God, just as all the light in this room comes from God's

sun. God put it into your father's heart, and your mother's heart, to love you, and there is no love in all this world that God did not inspire. You know what that beautiful text says, "God is love." Say it together: "God is love."

Now our hearts are just like little mirrors. If we turn them toward ugly things, they reflect ugly things. See how this mirror reflects an ugly image. So will our hearts. But if we turn them toward God's love, they will reflect that just as readily.

And now go back to Mary and Lucy, the two girls who do not love each other. How can it be helped? Easily enough. Just let one of them—all the better if it is both of them—turn her heart toward God, and pray him to send his love to her, and he will do it. And then let her go to her friend, and reflect on her God's beautiful love, and her friend will reflect it back; she can hardly help it. Mary and Lucy will love each other.

There is just one way of preventing this wonderful reflection of love, and that is—what do you think? Why, the same way that it is with mirrors. Here is an old, cracked, worn-out mirror. You cannot see your face in it. It reflects the sunlight very poorly indeed. That is the way Mary and Lucy will grow, if they do not take good care of their hearts.

And then, here is a great black cloth. I will throw it over the mirror and put in the brightest sunlight I can find. You see, it does not reflect

a single ray. Do you know what the black cloth is, that people sometimes throw over these heart-mirrors we have been talking about? That dark cloth is called hate, and when it is thrown over our heart not a bit of God's beautiful love can we reflect, no matter how brightly it shines. O, let us keep that ugly black cloth away from our hearts.

WHAT IS IN IT?

A Temperance Object Lesson

USE a large goblet, filled with water colored red to represent wine. It will be crowded with a great variety of little objects, which you will draw out, one by one, and hold up before the children. Tell the children that these things are usually invisible, but that they are hidden away in every glass of liquor, just the same.

You will draw out a little cake of red paint, and ask the children what that is for. That is the color that gets on the drunkard's nose. You will draw out a miniature pocketbook, and show the children that it is empty. Ask them what becomes of the drunkard's money. Draw out a toy chain, and talk about the prisons, and how drunkards get there. Draw out a ragged piece of broadcloth, and tell about the drunkard's clothes. Draw out a bit of printed paper, the printing all blurred and illegible, and tell about the drunkard's memory. Draw out a model of a coffin or a tombstone,

and talk about the drunkard's death, and the death of his dear ones. This illustration may be enlarged or limited, as the speaker thinks best.

All these terrible things are in the wine cup. They are in it, however, and not outside. What is the way to escape them, then? and to get others to avoid them?

A CONGRESS OF ANIMALS

An Object Talk on Kindness to Our Dumb Friends

PREPARE yourselves with large and striking pictures of the common animals. Tell the children that God has given the animals into the hands of men, to take care of, but men are doing it so poorly and so unkindly that the animals have come together to talk about it, and make complaint. Ask the children to name one animal that men treat cruelly.

If they name a horse, take out your picture of a horse and pin it to the blackboard. The horse has come to make complaint. What has it to complain of? Ask the children, and write down what they tell you and what you wish to add, putting the list under the picture. It will read: "Poor food, cold barn, beating, blinders, check-reins, exposure," etc.

In similar way call out pictures of the dog, the cat, the bird, the sheep, the cow, the pet rabbit,

the gold fish of the acquarium, etc. Fill the board with the pictures of these animals and the list of their woes.

At the close be sure to bring out some of the things that children can do to lessen these evils, and call on the children to pray that they may themselves be more kind, and that they may help others to be more kind, to these dumb friends and helpers of man.

DOLLARS

An Object Lesson on the Right Use of Money

[A change in the name of the coin and the description of the pictures on it will adapt this little talk to any other country.]

HERE is a pile of silver dollars. What a lot of money! And how much good this money has done, passing from hand to hand on its journey over the world. Don't you wish each coin could speak, and tell you its story? Don't you think that God can read on every coin a long history of noble deeds and evil deeds in which it has helped? Suppose, instead of the pictures you see on a coin, —the goddess of liberty, and the American eagle, —you could see the picture of the last thing that coin had bought; wouldn't that be interesting?

Hello! It really looks as if that were the way with this pile of coins! See what I have found on the other side of this silver dollar. The picture

of a great sack of flour! [These pictures will either be drawn, or cut out of illustrated papers, and pasted on the backs of the coins.] Now I know what dollar this is. This must be the dollar that belonged to little Henry Helpful,—all his own,—and he gave it gladly, to buy poor Mrs. Carlton some flour. Why, this is a noble dollar! It ought to be made of gold.

Now I wonder what is on the back of this coin. A big box of candy! That tells me that this dollar used to belong to little Grace Greedy, who bought a box of candy with it, and ate it all up by herself, so that she got the toothache and became sick. I'm not at all proud of this dollar. It ought to be made of copper.

Well, well! Just look at the back of this coin! A book,—and it's the Bible. This is certainly the dollar that Theresa Thoughtful saved for the mission-box, to use in sending the good Book to people that have never heard about Jesus. This dollar ought to be all diamond. And here's a picture of another book, on the back of this dollar; and I see by the name of the book that this dollar belonged to young Stephen Student, who spent it to get himself a history of the United States. That was a good way to spend money, wasn't it? [Let the speaker add other coins, with their pictures and lessons.]

NAMES

A Conversation with the Children, to Show Why They Should Join the Church

SHOW the children how sensible and right it is to expect them to take publicly the name of "Christian," by using the following illustration:—

Ask a boy his name. "John." John what? "John McDonald." Why is he called McDonald? Because it is his father's name. But why should he want to carry his father's name? Why not drop it? Because he couldn't be told, then, from other Johns. Because he loves his father, and his father loves him. Because he is proud of his father, and of his father's name. Because his father takes care of him, and it would be very mean not to own his father after all his father has done for him.

Ask a girl her mother's name. "Mrs. Mary Jones." But why is she called Mrs. Mary Jones? Why not simply Mrs. Mary? Because Jones is her husband's name. But why should she want to carry her husband's name? Because she wants to be distinguished from other Marys. Because she loves her husband, and her husband loves her, and takes care of her. Because she is proud of her husband and of her husband's name.

Ask some of the boys to what political party their fathers belong. "He is a Democrat." "He

is a Republican." Why does he call himself a Democrat? a Republican? Because he believes as that party does. Because he wants to be counted with it and for it. Because he thinks that party best for him and for the country. Because he is proud of it and of its name.

By this time it will be easy enough to show why, if it is right and wise for people to take these different names, it is also their duty to take the name of Christian, and for just the same reasons: So that they may be distinguished from others. Because Christ is taking care of them. Because he loves them and they love him. Because they are proud of him and of his name.

THE BLACK HEART

A Sermon-Story on Truthfulness

THERE was once a boy, named Will, who did something very bad. He told a lie about a schoolmate with whom he was angry, and the teacher punished his schoolmate, deceived by the lie that Will told.

At recess Will noticed that the scholars shrank away from him as if they were disgusted and frightened, but he thought little of it. During the afternoon he saw his teacher looking at him several times very intently and strangely. When he got home his mother cast one glance upon him, and then burst into tears.

Will rushed up into his little room to look at himself in the mirror and see what was the matter. Dear me! he saw a terrible sight. He had become, in some way, so transparent that his heart shone right through his body and his thick clothes, and his heart was a dreadful black one! His coat and vest were black, but they looked quite light, compared with the blackness of that heart, piercing through.

Well, Will was ashamed to go out. He hung his head among his schoolmates. He tried to get into dark corners where people would not see his black heart; but he could find no corner dark enough to hide his blackness. At last he went crying to his mother, and asked her what he should do. He told her the whole story of his lie, and of how the black heart had come at once.

Will's mother led him to the mirror when he had finished the sad story. "See," said she; "already your heart is less black, now that you have confessed to some one. I think that it will all be as it was before if you pray to Jesus to forgive you, and tell your classmate and your teacher and the whole school how sorry you are."

And so Will thought he would. He prayed that night long and earnestly, and was astonished and delighted to see, in the morning, how much lighter his heart was. Its blackness now seemed so little noticeable that he thought he had done enough, and that it would become as it was before

without his taking any more trouble; so he went all that day without saying anything about it.

But he found that his mates shrank from him more than ever, and his teacher looked at him more strangely than ever, and when he got home he saw that his heart was of a more intense blackness than ever before. So that night he prayed hard, and the next morning he prayed hard, and went off to school without looking in the mirror. As soon as school began he rose up before them all and told what a dreadful thing he had done, and asked the forgiveness of his classmate, and the teacher, and the whole school. They all forgave him gladly, and at recess everybody was kind to him, and, best of all, when he got home and looked in the mirror he found that there was no great, black heart showing through, but he was a happy boy again, just as he had been before he told the terrible lie.

A CLOTH, A WATCH, A SPRING

An Object Lesson on Sabbath-Observance

Bring before the children the three objects mentioned in the title. Show them first a pure, clean handkerchief, and then one terribly soiled. How can the last be made like the first? And if I use the clean handkerchief right along, day after day, with no washing, it will soon become as bad as the dirty one? Yes. Show the children how

their souls need wash-days, too, though they should be kept as clean as possible all the time. Sunday is that wash-day, to make them fresh and pure again.

Show next your watch, and ask how long it will run without getting out of order. And if we carry it after it has got out of order, what happens? Everything goes wrong. We miss engagements. We are too late, or too early, everywhere. What is to be done? We must leave it with the jeweller, and he will regulate it. Now have you ever heard of people who need regulating? Indeed, don't we all get out of order continually, so that everything goes wrong with us? Show the children how Sunday is a day set apart for regulating, and getting the machinery of life to running smoothly and truly.

Finally, show the children a coiled spring. Put a weight on top of it, and then lift it off. The spring flies back, just as before. What if I should keep the weight on the spring for a year, or ten years? Would the spring fly back then, if the weight were removed? No; all its elasticity would be gone. Show the children how constant work is like a weight upon us, and how Sunday removes the weight, so that we recover our elasticity.

Here, ranged in order on the table, are three little preachers, telling us what Sunday is for. It is to make us clean, says the cloth; and wise, says the watch; and strong, says the spring.

STONES AND PEOPLE

An Object Lesson on a Pure Heart

I've brought you a stone, a beautiful piece of quartz, but O, how dirty! See, I will brush off some of the dirt, and show you the loveliness inside. How bright it is, and how it flashes in the sunlight! But the stone, beautiful as it is, cannot keep itself clean, can it? And so it cannot keep itself beautiful. I will sprinkle some dust upon it, and you must watch and see whether it will clean itself. No; the beautiful stone is all ugly now, and will remain so until some one comes along to wash it off again.

But people are not like that, are they? When dirt gets on your hands or your faces, you do not wait for some one to come and wash it off; you wash it off yourself. That is because you are alive, and the stone is dead. Think of it: the only things in all the world that keep themselves clean are alive. Dead things, like stones, and wood, and iron, have to take all the dirt that comes on them, and keep it.

But there's a dirt that is worse than all the dirt I have been talking about, and that is the dirt that gets on our hearts,—the mean thoughts, and the evil words, and crossness, and lying, and disobedience, and laziness. How are we going to keep clean from these things?

Well, it's just like this stone, with some people.

They may be very beautiful and smart, and all that, but their hearts are dead,—almost as dead as this lovely bit of quartz. And whatever dirt falls on their hearts stays there; they do not wash it off. If some one throws at them an unclean word, it sticks. And if they get into foul company, all the dirt is rubbed on their hearts, and remains there. They have not life enough to keep their hearts clean.

We know, do we not? who can give us life in our hearts. It is the same one who gives us life in our bodies, and makes us strong enough to keep our bodies clean. It is Christ, the pure one. Let us all pray to him to keep our hearts from growing dull and senseless and unclean.

STANDING STILL OR MOVING ON

A Story to Teach Helpfulness

THERE were once two little sunbeams, starting out from the sun. Both were wondrously little, smaller than a cambric needle. Said one, "It's of no use. I am too small ever to travel that immense distance and reach the earth. I'll wait till I get bigger." So that sunbeam stopped where it was, and waited. It waited, and waited, and it is waiting still, not a bit bigger than it was at first.

But the other sunbeam, small though it was, kept bravely on, as sunbeams are wont to do. And as it kept on, it grew. Longer and longer

it stretched, flashing out, mile after mile, and thousands of miles, and millions of miles, and more miles than you can think, until at last the brave sunbeam reached the earth. It shone in on a poor sick woman, who was lying in bed, and it made her smile. And the earth turned a little, and it shone on a group of children at play, and they clapped their hands. And the earth turned around a little more, and it shone on an old man reading his Bible, and made the page glorious to him. And the world is still turning, and swinging new places around under the sunbeam, that stretches, small as it is, from the earth to the sun.

That's the way it is with all little things. If they stand still, they will remain little forever. But if they start boldly out, doing whatever God wants them to do, shining just a little way ahead, and then a little way farther, why, it's simply impossible to think how far they will shine, and how many lives they will make brighter, small as they are, before they are through.

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